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THE  
**Reasoner**

AND

**THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.**



‘It is not possible to destroy political servitude while allowing religious servitude to remain; the political springs by necessity from religious slavery. In that place where the priest may say to an entire people, “Surrender to me your reason without conditions,” the Prince, by an infallible logic, may repeat also, “Surrender to me your liberty without control.”—QUINET.

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# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## DEFENCE OF OPINION A WARFARE.

A SHORT ADDRESS TO READERS.

THE eleventh volume of the *Reasoner* commences with this number, and the reader has a right to expect some formal statement of the prospects before us. But I am too much occupied with the enemy to make it. During the past fortnight I lectured four times in Glasgow, and four times in Paisley; now I write from Dundee. In the next four days I expect to speak in Galashiels, in Glasgow, Paisley again, and Carlisle. By the time that this appears I shall be engaged in the defence of Opinion against the Reverend James Fleming, of Lancaster. Amidst incessant peregrinations it is not possible to render such an account of our stewardship as I am anxious, and otherwise prepared to present. It is, however, a good augury that we are so much employed in making progress as not to have time to report it. One sign of onwardness is, that the Newspapers are beginning to think our proceedings matters of public interest. When the Press begins to report us, the Pulpit must debate with us. The audiences I have met lately have been, in all places, greater than I have ever met before. I speak of an average estimate; and although the terms of admission have been higher than usual, it has not affected the numbers, which have exceeded the facilities of ventilation in some of our halls. The last volume has been the most prosperous of this series, and I expect to find, on balancing the accounts, some small salary in my favour as editor. The Shilling List, when some subscriptions to hand are acknowledged, will reach nearly or quite two thousand shillings. On my return to town I shall prepare some papers on important plans for the future. Now I can venture only on one detail. The Wrapper of the first Monthly Part of this new volume will be virtually a Supplement. It will contain a variety of special and permanent information which ought to be constantly before our readers. At length we shall present parts regularly to the Metropolitan press, and if our readers can do the same by the Provincial press, we shall have Monthly notices, and not unfrequently discussions of our views. A greater result still is attainable by us of this kind—if each reader, who is able to do it, will give his weekly number away to a new person each week, and take a Monthly Part for himself, to bind. By this plan our circulation would indefinitely increase two ways—one by way of Monthly Parts, and the other, and more important, through the incessant distribution of the *Reasoner* into new hands. After a time, repeat the gift of copies to friends who have not come to feel interest in the views advocated. In other cases, let the weekly number be given to neighbours, shopmates, and strangers. Our circle is so much a 'working circle,' that I do not doubt that this suggestion will be acted upon.

Frequently the observation is made to me, 'Why devote yourself to such an advocacy as that which the *Reasoner* maintains, when there is this and that topic

to which you might, more profitably to yourself or the public, occupy yourself? I seldom return an answer. The remark does not sound to me like an inquiry or even a remonstrance, so much as like a lesson. It shows how much is yet left undone in the development of our objects when their directness to the public welfare is not perceived. In the same manner when I leave a pulpit, as I have just done that of the Rev. George Gilfillan, of Dundee, and note the silence maintained about us—how the preacher is able to offer to his congregation a case *as ours* which has no feature of ours about it; when such a course *can* be taken I feel neither anger nor reproach, but retire more and more mindful of the labour and duty before me. For a long time I asked the Pulpits to debate with us. I ask it now no longer. I express my willingness to meet them, but do no more. They put it down as an impertinence when I first requested them, and instead of answering courteously, they preserved a contemptuous silence. It is our fault that they can do this. We ought to make it impossible for them to keep silence. When we enter the field with an enemy, and he can afford to play in his camp when we challenge him to battle, he has a right to his play. It is our duty to march up and spoil his play—to make it *dangerous* for him to play; and if we cannot do this, it is of no use whining about it. We must cast about, strengthen our forces, and do as men should do under similar circumstances. Complaint is our reproach; surprise is but the expression of our inexperience. We must *fight*.

How this is all to be done, will be told as opportunity offers. More I have not now time to tell; but this I know, it must be done, and that the right work is being done, though partially. We are numerous enough for the work, and I ask the earnest to help. We can give disquietude to Zion, which is not what it pretends to be, a kind, courteous, fairplay Zion, but a haughty, insolent, proud, defaming, contemptuous Zion. This is the only Zion that exists. The front of the Church to us is relentless and vindictive. Be it so. Let us not act as children, and idly quarrel with all this. It is our fault if it continue so. We have the truth and the right on our side, and I pardon all who *can* treat us rudely. Why do we let them? Why is not the name of Freethinker, or Sceptic, or Rationalist, or Atheist, as honourable a name as Christian? We have ourselves to thank if it is not. It sounds as well, and means as much that is sincere, and more that is publicly useful. We have indulged in considerable coasting about the enemy, now let each go to battle in some way or other. War on error ought to be as stern, as incessant, as diversified, and as glorious as war on men has been. The hand of fellowship and the word of love give to all men, but show them at the same time how they miss truth and usefulness to which they might profitably attain. If we do not this, our profession of good will is a mere cant. While we say Freedom of Opinion is a power, and do not make a power of it, the world laughs at us, and has a right to laugh; but it will cease to laugh when we come to make a power of our opinions.

'How gentle Holyoake is—too gentle for his work. He is a lamb who fights with wolves,' is the exclamation of many a critic of our course. The truth is, I can never resent the rude speeches of Christians. I sit and wonder that these men *dare* be rude, and ask, Why is it? Respect cannot be had by asking for it: it must be *commanded*, and that is to be effected only by action. It is of no use putting on the wolf in words, and playing the lamb in work. Every braggart can do this. We must reverse the order. The world is theirs who have a true purpose, and the industry which never ceases to work for its realisation.

Abruptly, because hastily, yet earnestly yours,

Dundee, May 14th, 1851.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

## DISORDER AND DECAY IN THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

## CURIOUS CONFESSIONS IN THE 'MORNING CHRONICLE.'

THE clever writer who, under the signature 'D. C. L.,' has in a long series of letters in the *Morning Chronicle* defended the principles and practice of the High Church party, makes a furious attack on the Bishop of Manchester in the *Chronicle* of the 21st instant, espousing the cause of the Rev. Mr. Alsop, Incumbent of Westhoughton, a correspondence between whom and the bishop has lately been published. The priest appears to belong to what is called the Tractarian party. The bishop is thus characterised by D. C. L. : 'Bishop Lee is a *protégé* of Lord John Russell, and is a model bishop of the new school of liberal Christians, which is in some people's eyes to regenerate the Establishment;' and he concludes his letter by declaring that 'if there ever has been a bishop more tyrannical, more persecuting, more unfair than another, it is Bishop Lee.' The case between the bishop and Mr. Alsop is this : in 1848 they had a correspondence on the subject of the use of the surplice in the pulpit, and other rubrical observances, to which Mr. Alsop, as a Tractarian, most religiously adhered, but which the bishop, a shining light of the Low Church, regarded with the most Evangelical horror. D. C. L. thus describes the grounds of Bishop Lee's aversion : 'The bishop, while a Christian, most tolerant in his creed, most tolerant of differences—tolerant as rumour has it, even to qualifying with a "perhaps" the belief in the divinity of our blessed Saviour as needful towards belonging to the National Church,—Bishop Lee, I say, makes one exception to his liberality, one abatement to his toleration : bitterly and unrelentingly does he persecute compliance with the rubric, and belief in the one Catholic and Apostolic faith of that portion of the Universal Church of which he is a bishop. Mr. Alsop strives to act up to that rubric, and he believes in that faith—thence the denial of justice which he has met with.' Extracts are given by D. C. L. from some of Mr. Alsop's letters ; he thus defends his attention to the strict rules of the ritual and rubric : 'I would make the Church the educator of all, the protector and almoner of the poor : in reality what it is in name, "the congregation of faithful men." \*I do not contemplate the restoration of the Church of the past, but I must see it something very different from what it is now ; I must endeavour as far as in me lies to make it so, or I will not hide the truth from your Lordship, *I must become an infidel*. Am I likely to make ritual observances dangerous ? With my strong *natural tendency* to unbelief, and not to superstition, am I not doing the best for myself as well as for others ? Would you wish to give me a blow that might cause paralysis, then death ? I leave this argument of the inner life. I wish to say here a few words about my use of the surplice, as this is the only change to which the people have really objected.'

What can be more plain, what can be clearer than the meaning of all this ? The doctrine of the High Church party approaches to that of Rome ; the mysterious efficacy of the Sacraments, the absolving power of the priest, and other tenets which tickle the vanity and dignify the office of the clergyman, are held by this section of the church, and not by the Evangelicals to which Bishop Lee belongs. Without the religious excitement and mystifying influence afforded by the contemplation of these doctrines, and the practice of supposed sacerdotal and almost magical functions which Tractarian principles permit Mr. Alsop to believe himself specially endowed with power from the Holy Ghost to perform, he cannot keep down the promptings of his reason and sober judgment. He must keep up the

excitement, he must believe himself an inspired priest, or he must yield to reason, and throw off Christianity altogether.

Some time after this correspondence the Bishop of Manchester, in an address at a public meeting of the Society for the Employment of Additional Curates, thus made use of Mr. Alsop's free and confidential unburthenings of his feelings: 'If I find incumbents preferring their wretched ceremonials of a bygone time to the vital essence of Christianity, and clinging to the surplice in ministration, instead of clinging to the word of truth, and telling me (for unfortunately I am not speaking of imaginary cases) that they must cling to those antiquated follies, or they must become infidels, then on them I will not bestow your bounty.'

Mr. Alsop was naturally very indignant at this, and complains of the construction put upon his words; he writes to the bishop, 'When in the fulness of my trust in you I used this strong and unguarded expression, I was thinking, as every word in that sentence discloses, of something very different from preaching in the surplice. I was thinking of a church in which the ministers would not be compelled to tell lies and to desecrate their holy office,—in which there might be more faith, self-denial, purity, and zeal, less worldliness, pride, covetousness, and sensuality in both priest and people. Such thoughts as these have driven many into dissent, as when I considered what our Christianity has been of late they have sometimes tempted me to doubt its divine institution.' Did ever an infidel bring more severe charges against a church? What weakness, what wavering, what bitter dissensions in the Established Church does this interesting case disclose!

E. B.

#### ERRONEOUS QUOTATION FROM THE 'ECLECTIC.'

THOSE of our readers who also read the *Eclectic Review*, will have been puzzled to remember in what part of it they could have read the passage quoted as from it on page 414 of the *Reasoner*. We have to tell them that it is not to be found in the *Eclectic*, it being an error to have ever said so. On construing—*mis-construing* one ought to say—some MS., the mistake was made. An erratum was ordered to be written next week, when Mr. Holyoake leaving town on the same day he forgot it, and as he undertook to do it, its omission was not noticed till our attention was drawn to it by a correspondent, whom we thank for his attentions. Fortunately for us, the paragraph in question was one that our readers would not consider a disparagement to that *Review*, and the only harm we have done, is having printed an unintentional misrepresentation of the views entertained in that quarter, which we could have no motive for doing consciously.

G. J. H.

#### NOTICE OF PROVINCIAL TOUR.

ON Sunday evening, May 11th, and on Monday and Wednesday, Mr. Holyoake lectured in Dundee. On Friday he addressed a public meeting in Galashiels, convened to petition Parliament on behalf of Secular Education. On Saturday he took part in the celebration of Robert Owen's Birthday, in the Communist Hall, Glasgow. On Sunday last he lectured in the same city, on Monday in Paisley, on Tuesday in Carlisle—and on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, he is to reply to the Rev. Mr. Fleming, in Lancaster.

### Examination of the Press.

THE EXPERIENCE OF AN OLD METHODIST.—We take this confession from No. 150 of the *People*. Having the pleasure of knowing the writer, we can attest that it is a genuine revelation:—It is an awful thing for a man to be compelled to separate himself from his kind, in such sense as every one must who, in our day, proclaims his repudiation of religious orthodoxy. But, when I think of the thousands upon thousands, in our own and other countries, whom false notions of religion are either making miserable, or withholding from happiness; when I think on the quackery of priests and interested religionists, and on the barriers thrown thereby in the way of instruction and enlightenment, notwithstanding the progress of our age in science and various ameliorations, I feel humbled, ashamed, and compelled, in spite of consequences, to add my mite of power to your honourable efforts. Is it not lamentable that children, born in the nineteenth century, should be taught to believe that God is a cruel God—that he is irreconcilable without blood; that they should be taught to believe that there is, in this otherwise glorious universe, a horrid hell of fire and brimstone, and that millions upon millions of God's own offspring will be chained down in liquid fire to all eternity—that they should be taught to believe that their own escape from this fearful pit of destruction is made to depend on faith in these abominable dogmas, more than on their being just and good—that they should be taught and brought to believe that salvation depends on abetting and supporting that system of priestly-quackery, which presses, like a nightmare, on the souls and bodies of men—which prevents their elevation—which chains them to the old antiquated ideas of bygone cruelty and ignorance? I say, when one thinks of these things, though it is an awful condition to be put out of the sympathy of one's kind, and ranked with every thing that is deemed most vile and most worthy of damnation, yet every good man will know what are the claims of duty, humanity, and true religion. These are the considerations which have induced me to write and send you the following account:—From my childhood to my eighteenth year, I attended the preachings of the Calvinistic Independents, my parents being members of one of their societies. From my eighteenth to about my fortieth year I was an active member of the Methodist Society. Though never a very wild fanatic, I was, of course, influenced in my life and feelings by the orthodox views on depravity, the atonement, endless punishments, &c. Being always a reader, and, in some sort, a thinker too, I was far from ever being satisfied with the evidences of Scripture inspiration. Thousands of times I referred, mentally, to the temptation of poor John Bunyan, wherein the devil whispered the query—'How do you know but the followers of Mahomet have as good evidence of the miraculous nature of their prophet, as you have concerning Christ's.' And as often have I queried whether the doubt was not from a different source than the 'Father of lies.' In fact, I rather hoped, and tried to persuade myself, that our belief was right, than assuredly believed. Moreover, from what I have known of the experience of others, I aver that there are very few thinking orthodox believers who are not in the same condition. This universal doubt says little in favour of Bible revelation. We never doubt gravitation, or any other great revelation of God in nature. It was from the steady, though slow operation of my own reason, more than from any other cause, that I first began to repudiate, one after another, several of the principal orthodox doctrines. I believe the notion of endless punishments was the first upon which my mind gave way. I reasoned thus—If I could not find it in my own heart to torment my own child, in such an awful manner, for a single day, nor

even for a moment, how can I believe that God, who must be the author of my best feelings, and the inspirer of my best thoughts, will torment one half of his own children in fire and brimstone to all eternity? The next orthodox notion which I discarded, was that respecting the Sabbath day. I believe my first light on this subject came from reading Dr. Paley's thoughts upon it, in his 'Moral Philosophy.' On a real examination, for myself, I was amazed that, not merely without Scripture authority, but in actual opposition to it, Christians had bound this antiquated Jewish ordinance to their own system. A third orthodox doctrine which fell from under me was that of total natural depravity. The process by which I was freed from this delusion was curious. It was from reading and reasoning upon the Mosaic account of what is called 'the fall of man,' in Genesis. I by no means *began* by disputing the inspiration of the story; I rather got a more elevated idea of what was meant by it. I saw that no such thing as total depravity was intended; and my imagination, aided by the words of the passage, made it into a beautiful allegorical account of man's elevation by the acquisition of knowledge. I had long lamented man's fall, and had all but blamed the Almighty for permitting it; and few can have an idea how pleased I was with my new discovery. And before any one ridicules my peculiar fancy, let him look at the passage and see if it is not as like truth as the commonly-received notion. I know not how I reconciled the New Testament interpretation of the affair: but these cogitations did not last long, for having put into my hands one of the controversial works of Dr. Channing, my fine fabric fell to the ground, and my views underwent a further and more consistent change. During the progress of these changes, my notion of sects and creeds, and of the meritoriousness of faith, were all turned topsy-turvy. The light which I had got enabled me to see that they were all nonsense. But none can tell—except the man who has experienced it—the occasional heart-rending, and the mental anguish, caused by such a revolution of the soul, and such a renunciation of all that the mind has previously rested upon. I still wished, even longed, to preserve my faith in the general inspiration of the Bible. I had hitherto no idea of finding any imperfection in Jesus, or the New Testament: and, in a Society which I joined for the discussion of religious subjects, I read some papers, to the effect that the whole Bible was a true revelation from God, and that its varied morality was only a proof that Infinite Wisdom condescended to the various conditions of the world's different ages, &c. But I did not long stop here. By reasoning I soon became convinced, that in the mind of God there could be no degrees in morality; that what was right and wrong at one period, must be so always. After this rubbish was removed, I began seriously to consider whether such and such portions of Scripture could really be inspired. First, with the aid of Dr. Priestley, the miraculous conception of Jesus was discarded. Next went such accounts as the sacrifice of Isaac by his own father; the commission of the Israelites to destroy the nations of the Canaanites; and David's being the man after God's own heart, while the Bible's own account made him a tyrant, an adulterer, and a murderer. Moreover, while my mind was in this state, I happened to hear a course of lectures on Geology, which was an entirely new subject to me. These lectures seriously shook my faith in Genesis. On further attention to the same subject, by reading, Moses was quite overthrown. I had long been heartily sick of the worldliness of all modern religious systems, and of the excessive party spirit of religionists, and I now was brought to regard sectarian parties with a degree of loathing. It is true I occasionally attended the Unitarian preachings, but more as a matter of form than anything else.

[To be concluded.]

## The Hebrew Religion: whence Derived.

BY EUGENE.

THE method adopted by Paine in refutation of the priestly dogma, that the Bible was the revealed word of God, was admirably adapted to his peculiar talents. He tried it by the internal evidence it contained of its authenticity, and by a comparison of its physical philosophy with the indisputable facts of science. The method of Strauss in the 'Leben Jesu,' testing by strict criticism and historical analysis the claims of the New Testament upon our belief in its genuineness and authenticity, was also appropriate to German genius and requirements. That beautiful and candid confession of the religious struggles of a life, 'The Phases of Faith,' tests the Jewish and Christian systems by the criterion of the moral sense, aided by historical criticism; and all these methods have their merits. But they do not exhaust the subject. Egyptian history discloses that the Hebrew chief, at once the priest and the statesman of the tribes of Israel, derived his religion from the Egyptians; comparison showing that the two creeds, the two cosmogonies, and the two sets of rites are so astonishingly alike as to be, unmistakably, from the same source. There are, it is true, some important practical differences, but they are only sufficient to make that which would otherwise have been a mere adoption, a derivation; and to mark a new epoch in the history of man—the declaration of equality before God.

Opinion is ever on the change; and mutability holds sway over creeds and faiths quite as much as over the material of the physical world. There is no absolute, unalterable religious belief. One race of men derives its system of fundamental belief and super-imposed doctrine and ceremonial from another; and human intercourse diffuses them through the world. The first race, or tribe, or nation in point of civilisation, gives an irresistible impulse to progress, and stamps its character for ages. Existing religions, so-called knowledge, appears to have been all derived—its origin being hidden in the unknown depths of the past. There in the early days, no doubt, the facts of nature, ever-present, and ever-recurring with

unchanging regularity, supplied to the thoughtful a key to a cosmogony, and a basis for a religion; and the more one looks into the diverse creeds of men, the more distinctly does it appear that religion is the adoration which man pays to the unknown, and which he vainly but enthusiastically believes he has unveiled, interpreted, and explained. Every religion has its roots in the earth, though the branches of some may tower towards the skies. The best and the purest is but an attempted explanation of phenomena which lie beyond the cognisance of logic and the senses, and towards which the aspirations of man will yearn for ever and for ever. We who know not the relation between cause and effect, dogmatise with arrogance of the Cause of Life, the mystery of Organisation, and the immortality of spiritual existence. We are ignorant of the sources of the Nile and the interior of Africa, and yet we pretend to be familiarly acquainted with the creation of the earth, the planets, and the sun! The bravest have striven, the subtlest have followed phenomena point by point with indefatigable zeal, the wisest have thought deeply and long—science, philosophy, fanaticism have each brought its quota to the common stock of interpretation; and what have we gained? In the way of belief, the theists remain where the old priests of Egypt appeared to have arrived ages and ages ago—and they trust in the 'Unutterable,' who is to be worshipped in silence. In the way of knowledge, philosophy has resolved that we can know appearances alone, and their uses to us. In the way of unbelief, the atheist rests his case here; that the existence of God is simply 'not proven,' and that he is content to remain within the bounds of the knowable, a student of phenomena.

And yet, here we are, still disputing whether a Book which contains, in one volume, the whole of the historical records and literature of a single people, shall be held as of divine origin, the unique depository of sacred truth, the criterion of moral law, the boundary of scientific knowledge, the sole and final expression of the enigma of the universe! And what does that book contain? The

history of a successfully asserted nationality, and of a *derived religion*.

The little that we know of the Hebrews in Egypt amounts to this, that they were slaves. There are few, very few, records of their existence in Egypt among the tombs and temples of the Nile. Travellers have fancied resemblances here and there, but the unprejudiced inquirer has been unable to trace them; and we may assume it as an ascertained fact, that the Hebrews did not occupy a sufficiently important rank among the Egyptians, to be thought worthy of a place among the painted records of that wonderful people. The story that they built the great pyramid is an error. The pyramid was standing when Abraham left the plains of Chaldee to dwell for a period in the Valley of the Nile. Until the time of Moses, the Hebrews had no thought of nationality. They lived in some part of the land of Egypt, probably worshipping the deities of Egypt, and conforming to the customs of the Egyptians. Even when Moses had led them into the desert, their first act of rebellion was to cast a golden calf—that is, to make for themselves an image of Apis—one of the gods they had been accustomed to adore in the land of their bondage. To Moses alone is due the honour of founding the Hebrew nation, impressing it with a distinct character, and imparting to it a distinct religion. A slight attention to the life of Moses will suffice to show how they came by their religion and their nationality.

We may accept the story of the Bible that Moses was a Hebrew boy, found by the daughter of the reigning Pharaoh among the reeds of the Nile; that he was brought up in the palace, and educated by the priests. And what does this involve?

In the Egyptian system we find two religions; one for the priests, and one for the people. The priesthood was the highest caste in the state. They were numerous and wealthy; their office was hereditary; they were the depositories of knowledge, as well as the authors of literature and science, and their power was unbounded. From their ranks the king was taken, and in their hands lay the main of the national destinies. They stood between the People and their God, whose will and pleasure they interpreted, and whose worship they ordained and

directed. Thus was the Egyptian government a theocracy, and its rulers pretended to hold their power direct from heaven.

But the pride of caste, the arrogance of exclusive knowledge, led them to entertain a very contemptuous estimate of the capabilities of the masses to receive and bear the truth. Though themselves monotheists, holding in reverence a being for whom they had no name, whom it would have been sinful to name, and worshipping this unknown God in silence; yet they invented for the people a system of polytheism, a splendid ceremonial worship, and formal and sacrificial adoration. This public worship of the Egyptians appears to have consisted of a worship of the deified attributes of the one God of the priesthood, presented to the people visibly through the symbols, the idols, and sacred animals. The chief temples were at once the palaces and the universities of Egypt; and it was in one of these places that Moses grew from youth to manhood.

So situated, adopted by the highest caste, and consequently heir to the highest knowledge of his protectors, it was thus that Moses obtained the idea of the one Supreme God, who was to be worshipped in silence; it was thus that he became learned in all the learning of the Egyptians, that he was initiated and accomplished in the mysteries, and instructed in the belief, and the cosmogony of the priesthood; the ceremonial observances, the gross polytheism, with which they imposed upon the people. It was in this school that he learned the Egyptian theory of creation. It was here he became an adept in natural magic. It was in the splendid temples of the Valley of the Nile that he assisted in the performance of those ceremonial rites which he afterwards partially adapted to the vagabond life of the Hebrews in the Desert.

But the Hebrew? While Moses was at Memphis in the palace of the king, they were making bricks without straw, and their lot was the hard lot of slaves. Thoroughly imbued with the superstitions of their equals among the Egyptians, the simple monotheism attributed to Abram effaced and forgotten, except by one here and there, they were dead to all ideas of nationality. But one day Moses slew an Egyptian, who had maltreated a Hebrew, and fled for his life



into the deserts of Sinai; remained there for years, meditated a great design, that of freeing his brethren from the double yoke of brutalising slavery and not less brutalising idolatry; and when the Pharaoh died, from whose vengeance he had fled, he proceeded to execute his design—perhaps the greatest, as originally conceived by Moses, to be found in the annals of antiquity. He succeeded in founding a nation; he failed in abolishing the priesthood, and in eradicating rigid ceremonial superstition. The inveterate habits of an ignorant people were too strong for his will, and too dogged for his ingenuity; the Hebrews sighed, not only for the flesh-pots of Egypt, but for the symbolical deities, the reigning priesthood, the festivals, and sacred months, of that charming land.

The religious system which Moses intended, and that which he was compelled to establish, are very different. He was opposed to ceremonial worship, yet he was compelled to permit, and even regulate it; he was opposed to the institution of a priesthood, yet he was compelled to establish one. But he succeeded in one important point—he abolished the monopoly of knowledge, proclaimed the right of the people to the great national ideas, and destroyed the fetishism of priest worship. This was a revolution, the like of which is not to be found in ancient history, and the forefather of many revolutions in modern times which are seldom traced to so antique a source. It amounted then to the laying bare of the most studiously concealed and important dogmas taught by the learned Egyptians, and was, so far, a declaration of the spiritual equality of man. This was the first, the most important deviation which Moses made from the practical theology of Egypt.

The next was significant of many things. The Egyptians believed in a future life, where the good were rewarded and the bad punished. Moses transferred the punishment and the reward to this life, tacitly denying the dogma of immortality, because he appears to have thought that reward and punishment are the more efficacious the more closely they attend on virtue and vice, and because he probably had no conception of a Hereafter, except the practically useless doctrine of the soul as an emanation from the Supreme, in whom at death it

would become again absorbed. This was too refined for the purposes of controlling the passions of an enslaved and degraded people. Political motives appear to have shaped his religious creed most likely more than he himself was aware. The Hebrews, demoralised by four hundred years of servitude, and much mixed up with men not properly Hebrews, who left Egypt in their company, required strict discipline and energetic measures to raise them to a state of respectable manhood as a nation. For that reason Moses appears to have subjected them to the privations of the desert, and for that reason he appears to have made the one Supreme God of the Egyptians a Tutelary God of the Jews. The sole originality of the Hebrew religion lies in its departures from the Egyptian, and for these, in part, political and moral motives can be assigned.

A few passages, containing both facts and speculations, from Miss Martineau's volume on 'Eastern Life, Past and Present,' will throw some light on this subject. She writes, that Moses contemplating the great design of his life, that of liberating the Hebrews, saw 'that they must be removed from the influences which had made them what they were, and then elevated into a capability for independent social life. . . . The Hebrews could never become enlightened amidst the darkness of popular life in Egypt. There could not be spiritual life in their houses, while "darkness that might be felt" brooded all about them. They could never be purified while the corruptions of idolatry swarmed within their dwellings, and among their dress and food—coming up from the river, and down upon them in the very air. They could never be elevated in views and character while subject to contempt as "an unclean people" (as Manetho calls them) and to the wrongs of slavery.—They must be removed. . . . No one knew better than Moses at this time, the privileges of life in the Desert. He had witnessed the hardihood, the self-denial, the trusting poverty, the generous hospitality, and the comparatively pure piety of the Arab tribes who lived in tents in nature's ascetic retreats. These were the very qualities the Hebrews needed, and could never attain elsewhere. It was not civilisation and its lessons that they needed. Civilisation and slavery were indissolubly con-

nected in their ideas. Discipline was what they needed; and not that discipline from the hand of man which must include more or less of slavery; but the discipline of Nature, whose service is perfect freedom. Here, while relaxing from the excessive toil which had broken them down, they were in no danger from indulgence. Here, while learning endurance, it would not be at the cost of that exasperation of feelings which had hitherto embittered their hardships. They would learn that submission to Nature which is as great a virtue as submission to Man is a vice. Here, among the free winds, and bold suns, and broad shadows, with liberty to rove, and exemption from the very presence of man, they might become braced in soul, free in mind, and disciplined in body, till they should become fit for an ulterior destination.'

The Hebrews reached the desert in safety, and Moses proceeded to legislate for them, and to carry out his great plans. The chief Idea of Moses was the immediate moral government of God.

'The Supreme, as made known in the heathen Mysteries, exercised no immediate government over men; and in order to give them any idea of a divine government, national and subordinate gods were presented to them, who must, of course, be named. Much superstition in Egypt was connected with the names of the gods; and the Hebrews could not, as the history shows us, recognise a protecting god, who was declared to them as a patriarchal, and was henceforth to be a national God, but through a Name. It was long, many generations, before they conceived of Jehovah as more than a National God. He was the God of their fathers, and their own: better and stronger than the gods of other nations, and even their over-ruler: but still, the God of none but the Hebrews:—the benefactor of the children of Abraham, but the enemy of the Egyptians and the Canaanites. In this last belief, it is evident that they were not contradicted or discouraged.'

That belief was clearly the origin of the doctrine set forth in later years that the Hebrews were a 'peculiar' people, and clung to now because it is so powerful an auxiliary of the revelation-idea.

The following shows how Moses was led to quit his original simple ideas derived from Egypt, and adapt them to the Hebrew mind and the altered circumstances of the Hebrew people:—

'It appears as if there had been an intention and a hope of training the Hebrews to a state of knowledge and obedience by moral instruction, and a plan of pure and simple worship; the obedience of Abraham, and the simplicity of his worship in the door of his tent, being perhaps the example and the aspiration which Moses had before him when he brought forth the Hebrews from Egypt. Warburton and others are of opinion that the ritual scheme was adopted after the affair of the golden calf, which showed the people to be more incapable of a pure religion and direct communion than could have been supposed. A comparison of the two sets of Commandments seems to countenance this view. The first set, though falling below the inculcation of personal righteousness, yet are of a much higher character than the second. They aim at a good degree of social order, for the age in which they were given, and contain nothing ritual, except the precept about the Sabbath. This is the set brought down by Moses when he found the people feasting about the golden calf, and which he broke and threw from him. The second ten, which remained permanent, are such as may well be believed to have accompanied the ritual system now supposed to have been instituted. They are all ritual except the first two: these two merely forbidding all covenanting with heathens, and making of molten gods. The whole set contains no directions for personal or social conduct. The fact certainly conveys the impression that a more advanced system of Moral Government was withdrawn for the time, and replaced by one less advanced, in proportion to the disappointment caused by the lapse of the degraded people. The Jewish writers, for the most part, lay the blame of this lapse on the influence of the Egyptian mob, "the mixed multitude" who followed in the train of the Hebrews: but it does not save their credit at all to suppose them more easily influenced by such comrades than by Moses and the ideas he had communicated.

[To be concluded.]

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## THE NEW REFORM IN GERMANY.

### IV.

*To the Editor of the Reasoner.*

SIR,—The one great opposition from which all conflicts of this time arise, is that of privilege and equalisation. The more pertinaciously on the one hand the privilege was maintained, and the more vivaciously on the other hand the acknowledgment of the equal rights of man was required, the broader and deeper the cleft was to be, which originated in society. To shut that cleft before the flood of revolution should break forth, was the purpose of Germano-Catholicisme.

We saw that opposition increasing in three quarters of the society; there the privileged doctrine opposed to the right of thinking equal for all men; there the privileged classes opposed to the equal political right of all citizens; there the privileged possession and enjoyment opposed to the natural right of each single one of the guarantee of his existence and pleasure of life. We were therefore endeavouring to accomplish the reconciliation by the means of knowledge and popular education. Being taught by history, that any progress in the cultivation of the nations has only arisen from their religious revolutions—these making the new purified principles of progress the agency and source of all their willing and acting, their manners, customs, and habits—we endeavoured to effectuate a religious revolution of the generation now living, in order to regenerate thereby the whole life of mankind. According to this the maxims of the Germano-Catholic communion, with regard to their doctrine, *Cultus*, and constitution, have been formed.

Sacred is the *dogma*, the time past teaches; *sacred*, because answering to the natural being of a man, *is the free knowledge of truth*, so we are teaching ourselves. We did not establish any confession of faith binding the single one. We concede the most perfect liberty of teaching, and we intend to make the results of scientific inquiry the joint property of all. Hereby we hope to take away the opposition of knowing and believing; there will be not longer any intolerance, the tolerance itself not being more wanted, and that penetrating dissension which has been brought in the German nation by religious factions since many centuries will be finished.

Sacred is the *ecclesiastical precept*, the old time teaches; sacred is the *free acting of man* when arising from the *unrestrained development of all that belonging to the sound, full, and complete nature of man*; sacred therefore the works of *true Christian love*, so we are teaching ourselves. It has been the hypocrisy of the old time that has oppressed the natural, pure, and sacred love of men's hearts by cultivating that selfishness which, as penetrating all relations of life, is the chief cause of that profound misery which a great deal of mankind is sunk in. The worship of Germano-Catholicisme is therefore the worship of love, the worship of life. And with regard to that our main purpose is to realise *on this earth* that kingdom of God which the time of old delayed in a life of *another world*. We turn the eyes from the other to this world. We do not embellish any heaven by pleasures being refused to man on earth, but we intend to enjoy them here, each regarding himself as the brother of the other. Our religion is not mere believing, our religion is true living, human living of man.

And thus while the old time teaches *dull obedience*, we are teaching the *liberty of moral will*. By that obedience and submissiveness to an individual will, praised as virtue by the old time, she has supplied that system of being put under a guardian which generated in society the privilege of classes, the source of so many dissensions and bloody conflicts. Against this we inculcate to the human heart the highest esteem as to the liberty of human will, openly pronouncing any oppression as sin, while the spontaniety of man is his natural and inalienable right.

As for the reproaches made to us for those endeavourings from the most different quarters, we say this : we are not *athcists*, because we seek and find God *within* the world, *within* the life ; like Jesus, we intend to live in God, and he ought to live in us. Christ is the founder of the true theory of education, as pronouncing truth and love the ground and corner-stones of human life, and the only real remedies as to the sick body of human society. Only this is our Christianity ; that preached by Christian orthodoxy we are and will be the destroyers of. We are no *social* or *communist sect*, but we *sanctify* the endeavourings of Socialists by elevating them into the rank of religion. We are no *political club*, but we *further* and *sanctify* the *democratic principles*, those being the spontaniety of man and liberty of human will. Therefore we are no obstacle to the purposes of Socialism, Democracy, Humanism. We regard ourselves as the true and positive promoters of all those endeavourings, and we cannot understand how it is possible to deem us as any impediment of them. Not sooner than the new view of the world having been elevated into the rank of the most intrinsic sanctuary of the human heart, it has power enough to reform and regenerate even the outward conditions of human society. This being our conviction, the result of so many efforts—proceeding from the purest ideas—did not surprise us this time. The bright splendour of truth has dazzled men and inspired them, but the beam of light did not yet penetrate into the innermost being of themselves. Yet men are fastened with their thoughts, their whole remembrance to the time past. They of course who wish to obtain prosperity by impetuous haste are forced to take another course, but their haste shall not guide them to a greater victory. And even the victory being *gained* would be but a transient triumphing. Therefore we persevere, franchising men in and from their innermost being ; we know that this way is the larger and more painful, but the victory then obtained is the surest, and not more to be taken away.

London, 1851.

CARL SCHOLL.

#### INQUIRER IN REPLY TO MR. CHILTON.

SIR,—The objection to the design argument, to which I adverted in my last letter in reply to Mr. Chilton, seems still to require some more specific statement and refutation. Formally stated, it is this:—We argue from analogy that the works of creation must be the product of a mind similar to our own. But mind requires the existence of body ; therefore the same analogy should lead us to conclude that they are the work of a body similar to our own. But this body contains marks of contrivance, &c. It is here assumed that any instance of forethought or provision may, by natural analogy, be referred either to mind or body ; that the one naturally involves the idea of the other, they being necessarily connected in the mind as cause and effect. But the fallaciousness of this representation of the process of the mind will be obvious when we consider that the constant and unfailing experience necessary to connect two events in the mind as cause

and effect, does not exist in this case, the body being found without its assumed correlative.

Various ingenious reasons have indeed been given for the belief that the mind is the result of material action, but it is certainly unheard of that this theory should be assumed on the mere grounds of common language and experience. There is no *reductio ad absurdum* here. In the method of a *reductio ad absurdum*, so common in the demonstration of converse propositions, we deduce an absurdity out of the proposition itself, as thus, admitting a fallacy, and then applying the same generalisation in an analogous case to produce contradiction: but here the absurdity arises only if we admit that the same common experience which leads us to infer that design implies a designer, teaches us also that mind is the phenomena of body. This is not an extension of the analogy at all, but rather a false substitution of one term for another in the analogy, which terms are not identical.

No analogy can be extended beyond the similar things on which it is founded. Law, order, and design, indicate intelligence, pomp, and wisdom, but nothing corporeal, as the footprints of primæval creatures indicate their structure, but not their instincts.

If from a faint analogy we were to infer that the planets were inhabited, we might be able to determine some of the physical conditions of the existence of their inhabitants; but who would be so absurd as to expect information concerning their internal policy or religion? Yet, misled by this sophism, we find the atheist making inquiries concerning the person of God, precisely analogous to these, conceived in precisely the same spirit, but with ridiculous triumph, and equally absurd and fallacious. In his letter in No. 247, Mr. Chilton says, that 'a belief in the action of invisible intelligent agency in the production of natural phenomena, appears to me to flow naturally and easily from man's ignorance of the purely material causes in operation in the universe;' and his former statement, that 'the theist failing to discover from an examination of natural phenomena, how the world and its furniture originated, assumes that it must have been made by a being equal to the task,' plainly shows the nature of the theism Mr. Chilton combats. But as in my reply I have shown what Mr. Chilton reluctantly admits, that 'it (theism) is not an assumption, but *only* (as if an inference, which differs from an assumption as truth from falsehood, were something *less*) an inference;' and as further Mr. Chilton repeats that theism precedes atheism (for through the affirmation the negation is known), the latter being no more than a declaration of dissent from the theist's conclusions; Mr. Chilton must also admit that his notions of theism being incorrect, his declaration of atheism was rather premature.

But Mr. Chilton asserts that atheism is also an inference, and I agree; it is an inference—an inference from facts not yet found out.

The idea of God, which at first arises from a sense of dependence on external things, is at last confirmed by the perception of design in the universe, and the ever-acknowledged and inextinguishable religious sentiment, while it constrains us to bow before him, determines also, as I have shown before, our notions of his moral nature. If we know the character ascribed to the Deity by any worshippers, we have a certain index to their own. The notions of power peculiar to a barbarous people are altogether physical; bravery is almost the sole virtue, and might in war the highest praise: these, therefore, are the peculiar attributes of their gods. Not having any clear notions of morality, it is no way inconsistent for them to ascribe actions to the gods which appear altogether mean and immoral to more enlightened minds. Hence the first man who attains to more exact views of morality and pro-

priety, is very apt to be persecuted as a blasphemer; for he shall find that his purer notions of morality do not square at all with the recorded conduct of the gods. And therefore as he sees them to be imperfect and criminal, he is a blasphemer of necessity. Hence the reason why the first infidels have ever been men of the most exalted intellect and virtue. For a man to be before his age, is to be subject to the scorn, the obloquy, and the persecution, of those whom he cannot help offending. No priest ever was in advance of his time. Several other inferences from this important truth might be adduced, but I forbear.

I have delayed this answer longer than perhaps is consistent with the interest of the debate, but this was unavoidable.

INQUIRER.

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TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

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SIR,—Some time since, as you are aware, I commenced editing a small monthly magazine entitled the 'Free Inquirer in Science, Politics, and Theology.' Being a local publication, and partly published in a locality where superstition is systematically bound up with the 'let alone and get what you can' principle, it has ceased with the fifth number. I do not say that the loss will be publicly felt, but if I had been able to keep it up, I think I should have done a little good. Already its influence, though small, began to attract notice. One of our local editors gave the 'Inquirer' a passing remark, while the editor of the *Portsmouth Times* gave me the credit of being 'bold even to the extreme limits of daring.'

While the 'Inquirer' was in existence no one cared to openly discuss the question at issue with me, but immediately it retired from office a few pious opponents abused me for my 'gross attacks on revealed religion.' As it is every minister in the town has been supplied with copies, and if they wish for discussion on the subject of religion, let them come forward.

After you have appropriated the proceeds of the 'Inquirers' to the purposes I have named below, I will regularly contribute 2s. 6d. a quarter to the *Reasoner* Fund while I remain in work. If I am wanted to assist in carrying on the work you have so successfully commenced, I will willingly come forward with my mite and with my humble abilities; nor will I shrink from my duty should we be so unfortunate as to have again to champion for freedom of discussion in the face of law. Meantime, I shall devote the next two or three years of my life to close study; I shall be able then to combat more effectually the existing errors of society.

GEORGE ROBERT VINE.

P.S.—I have 3000 of Nos. 1 and 2 of the new series of the 'Free Inquirer' on hand, which I should be glad to dispose of, in packages, at 2s. 6d. per hundred, 1s. 3d. for fifty, or 8d. for twenty-seven. Nos. 1 and 2 are complete in themselves, and contain the following complete articles: Christianity and its Professors—Religious Frauds—Christianity v. Christian Men, by myself—The Catholic Controversy, by J. J. M.—An Essay on the 'Theory of Development,' by W. Chilton—the Three Rings of Boccaccio, and several scientific and social extracts. Size, 24 pp. 12mo. The proceeds to be devoted to the following purposes:—10s. to the *Reasoner* Fund, 5s. to the Stamp Abolition Committee, 5s. to the Hungarian and Polish Refugees, and the remainder for myself. I will send a parcel to the *Reasoner* Office for such disposal, if Mr. Watson will have the goodness to take charge of them.

G. R. V.

Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the Reasoner as an organ of Propagandism, one Friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—and so on according to ability and earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 32, 1621s. 6d.—W. R., Liverpool, 40s.—J. E. Sinyard, Bradford, 2s. 6d.—W. C., per ditto, ditto, 1s.—R. Wilson, North Ofram, 1s.—J. Sturzaker, North Ofram, 2s.—Alasco, 1s.—Mathew Knowles, Blackburn, 2s.—W. S., per Mrs. Watson, 1s.—Total, 1672s. These sums ought to have been added to the list last week; but Mr. Holyoke had the items with him.

GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.—May 25th [5], Alexander Campbell, 'On the Formation of Character.'  
 Hackney Literary and Scientific Institution, Mermaid Assembly Rooms.—May 28th [8], George Dawson, M.A., 'On Old Times and Old Ways.'  
 Hall of Science, City Road.—May 25th [7½], Samuel M. Kydd, 'National Greatness.'  
 Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—May 23rd [8], a Discussion. 25th [7½], a lecture.  
 Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'  
 Free Inquirers' Society, British Coffee Rooms, Edgeware Road.—May 25th [7], a lecture.  
 Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

The Social Hymn Book..... 0 6  
 Carpenter's Political Text Book..... 1 0  
 13 Lectures by Robert Owen..... 1 0  
 Romanism the Religion of Terror, and Sects and Secretaries, by S. P. Day, formerly a Monk..... each 0 2  
 Shortly will be published DEATH-BED REPENTANCE, its fallaciousness and absurdity; a new edition, rewritten by Robert Cooper, of Manchester..... 0 2  
 The Communist Chronicle, by Goodwyn Barnby 6  
 The Student, a sceptical play, by F. Bate 0 3  
 Just published, Two Letters to Dr. Cumming on the subject of his lecture, entitled God in Science, by W. D.  
 E. T. has constantly on sale a large collection of all the best political, social, and infidel publications.  
 E. T. returns his best thanks to his friends for their patronage, and hopes, by attention to their orders and moderate charges, to merit their continued support and recommendation.  
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TRUELOVE'S Periodical and Publication Depot, 22, John-street, Fitzroy-square, adjoining the Literary and Scientific Institution.  
 E. T. is now selling the following works, many of them at reduced prices:—  
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 Age of Reason..... 3 0  
 Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, complete 6 0  
 Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, complete..... 15 0  
 The First Five Vols. of the Reasoner, hf.-bd., including the Herald of Progress..... 20 0  
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 The Diogenesis, by Robert Taylor..... 5 0  
 The Devil's Pulpit, by ditto..... 4 6  
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 Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love, by Gerald Massey..... 1 0  
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 Babeuf's Conspiracy for Equality. B. O'Brien Eugene Sue's Wandering Jew, best edition 3 0  
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### Our Open Page.

DURING the last Knott Hill Fair, which commenced on Easter Monday, there was a stall in Deansgate, Manchester, on which was nothing but Bibles and Testaments. Two men, who had the appearance of town missionaries, were at the stall, and were distributing hand-bills asking the following questions:—'Dear reader, have you a Bible or Testament? You may think this a strange question. It is, however, certain that thousands of families are *destitute* of that precious book which can alone make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. This surely cannot be because they are unable to purchase one, for they can have a Bible for 10d., a Testament for 4d.....But perhaps you have a Bible. Will you not then recommend it to others? Think a moment. Are there no friends or neighbours, or even members of your own family, who are destitute of it? If you know of any such, what better present can you take them than that which can administer solid and lasting comfort in every time of need?.....Let the word of the Lord have free course and be glorified.' This is a new phase of Christian propagandism. Why not freethinkers do likewise? A bill might be issued, saying—'Have you a *Reasoner*? If you have not, purchase one immediately. It is published weekly at 1d.; and if you approve of it, recommend it to your relations and friends. In its pages is advocated the right of private judgment in matters of speculative belief; as those who must answer for themselves ought to think for themselves. Let freethought be encouraged, that superstition and intolerance may be made to disappear,' &c.

A.

The *Bath Herald*, of September 1828, has the following remarks:—'A member of the legal profession in this city lately had occasion to call upon an invalid gentleman of the most exemplary character and piety, residing at a short distance from Bath, for the purpose of swearing him to an affidavit, and requested the loan of a Bible for the purpose. "I have no such book in my house," said the gentleman emphatically to the astonished lawyer; "for, sir, *I have a family of daughters!*" Notwithstanding this singular declaration, a better man or more devout Protestant Christian is not living than this gentleman.'

The principles of Dissent (says 'My Life,' by an ex-Dissenter) are not fixed and stationary, like those of the Church of England. Presbyterians to-day, Independents to-morrow, Baptists ten years hence, and, I am sorry to say, sometimes Socinians afterwards. I heard an old Independent minister once declare at the Wiltshire Association, 'That if all the chapel deeds of all the Independent meeting houses should be examined, not one out of ten would be found to be strictly legal. But then we are all dissenters; some think this and others think that—but we all agree to oppose the church, and whenever we are called upon to assist and pull down the successor of St. Peter, we give a willing and cheerful hand.'

In the spring season at Bath, in the year 1760, subscription-books were opened for prayers at the Abbey, and gaming at the Rooms. At the close of the first day the number of subscribers for prayers were twelve, and for gaming 67! The following lines were written on the occasion:—

The Church and Rooms the other day  
 Open'd their books for prayer and play;  
 The priest got twelve, Hoyle sixty-seven:  
 How great the odds for Hell 'gainst Heaven!



# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## THE ENEMY IN THE NORTH.

AFTER a month's speaking and travelling, and hunting after the enemy in the north, I have reached the pleasantest of places to me—my own fireside—exhilarated and stronger in health than when I set out. It was not always possible to secure an alternate night for rest, but to some extent I accomplished it, and am all the better in consequence, and the recess gave me time to see pleasant places and pleasant people. I have been through the wonderful crypts of Glasgow Cathedral, and stood on the grave of Edward Irving, the divinest of modern revivalists. I have visited the grave of poor Thom the poet, at Dundee, and sailed over the charming Tay. I have listened to the Rev. George Gilfillan, and rambled down the Gala Water—along the silvery Tweed—round Abbotsford, which was the grave of its Wizard architect—through glorious old Melrose Abbey—over Carlisle Castle—peeped into the dungeon of Fergus McIver, one of the manliest of heroes, and stood over the drawbridge through which he passed on the morning on which he was beheaded—stared at brawny Skiddaw mountain (without putting it out of countenance), and gazed at the spectral ruins at Penrith, which overlook a scene that might be taken for the emblem of eternity. But—Behold, are not these things recorded in the Chronicles by the Way? (which, by the way, I have not yet written, but which I will make a violent attempt to write for the succeeding numbers of the *Reasoner*). At present I have an Ave Maria to say, and some beads to count, as a propitiation for long absence, to my household Gods—certain juvenile Deities in the shape of four wild little people, who are not exactly aware that such a word as 'subordination' is in the dictionary, and who are waiting to treat me to their newest scream and their merriest gambol.

Curious events have taken place in Lancaster this past week, both on the part of the Rev. Mr. Fleming, who has exhibited unprecedented conduct, and the *Lancaster Gazette*, which has published one of the rudest of articles, which was also an incitement of the people of that town to very ambiguous conduct. Shopkeepers in the town have been under special discussional sensation since the appearance on the walls of a placard headed 'Defence of Opinion against the Rev. J. Fleming,' saying—

'The public of Lancaster are respectfully informed that Mr. G. J. Holyoake, of London, editor of the *Reasoner*, author of the "Logic of Death," and several similar publications, will deliver three lectures in the Large Room, New Inn Yard, Market Street, May 21st, 22nd, and 23rd, on the following subjects: I. The case stated between Atheism and Theism, with a view to show the moral innocency of speculative opinions, even the most extreme, if conscientiously held. II. Moral objections to Christianity: the new class of reasons for not accepting the religious doctrines of the day do not relate so much to critical discrepancies as to moral defects. III. Catholicism consistent Christianity, and the actual Type of the

Churches around us, all of which alike excite personal distrust and public alarm.—In a letter which appeared, on April 19, in the *Lancaster Guardian*, from the Rev. J. Fleming, that gentleman said, “If Mr. Holyoake considers himself at all wronged by my strictures on the ‘Logic of Death,’ let him come to Lancaster, and defend what he has written in a series of lectures, and I will be prepared to reply to him, and vindicate the claims of Christianity against all he may advance against them.” The above lectures will contain Mr. Holyoake’s defence of his writings in general, and of the “Logic of Death” in particular. Each night an opportunity will be afforded to the Rev. Mr. Fleming to reply. Admission: gentlemen 3d., ladies 2d.

What took place after this bill appeared I shall commence to relate first, though in point of time it should stand last in the Chronicles aforesaid.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

### APOLOGIES FOR MOSES.

THE religiously educated inquirer is constantly perplexed in his study of the Pentateuch, by the alleged personal action of Almighty God in the legislation and policy of the Jews, which prevents his accounting for the apparent omissions and barbarities in their Law, and for their merciless foreign and civil wars, by any deficiency of civilisation and enlightenment in their legislators and rulers. Defenders of the supernatural wisdom of the Bible are driven to the strangest shifts in order to scramble through this insurmountable difficulty.

In one of Bishop Burnet’s conversations with Lord Rochester, that penitent sinner ventures to express to the worthy prelate a doubt of the justice of the wholesale massacre of the Canaanite nations. Burnet argues that ‘God must have an absolute right over the lives of all his creatures,’ and that ‘if he could take away their lives without injustice or cruelty, he had a right to appoint others to do it.’ And furthermore, ‘the taking away people by the sword is a much gentler way of dying than to be smitten with a plague or a famine; and for the children that were innocent of their father’s faults, God could in another state make that up to them.’ Which is of course a most ample explanation.

In Matthew Henry and Scott’s ‘Commentary on the Bible,’ we find the following attempt to justify these same massacres, with reference to the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy, from the tenth to the eighteenth verse:—‘In dealing with the worst of enemies the laws of justice and honour must be observed; and as the sword must never be taken in hand without cause, so not without cause shown. Even to the proclamation of war must be subjoined an offer of peace, if they would accept it upon reasonable terms. That is, say the Jewish writers, upon condition that they renounce idolatry, worship the God of Israel as proselytes of the gate that were not circumcised, pay to their new masters a yearly tribute, and submit to their government.’ Very reasonable terms truly! and it will be seen that the nations to whom they were offered were very leniently treated in comparison with those who were found in possession of the promised land. ‘The nation of Canaan are excepted from the merciful provisions of this law. Remnants might be left of the cities that were far off, because by them the Israelites were not in so much danger of being infected with idolatry; nor was their country so directly and immediately intended in the promise. But of the cities that were given to Israel for an inheritance, none of the inhabitants must be left. Since it could not be expected that they should be cured of their idolatry, they would infect Israel.’ Can anything be more clear? This Almighty Being ‘could not expect’ that the

Canaanites should be cured of their Paganism, did expect that his favourite Jews would easily be cured of their Theism, and therefore, as the shortest and easiest method, ordered the idolaters to be exterminated!

Mr. Henry Rogers, in his 'Reason and Faith' (p. 82), says: 'Against the alleged absurdity of the laws of Moses, such works as that of Michaelis have disclosed much of that relative wisdom which aims not at the abstractedly best, but at the best which a given condition of humanity, a given period of the world's history, and a given purpose, could dictate. In pondering such difficulties as still remain in those laws, we may remember the answer of Solon to the question, whether he had given the Athenians the best laws: he answered, "No, but the best of which they were capable;" and the illustrious Montesquieu remarked, "When Divine Wisdom said to the Jews, 'I have given you precepts which are not good,' this signifies they had only a relative goodness; this is the sponge which wipes out all the difficulties which are to be found in the Law of Moses.'" This is a truth which we are persuaded a more profound philosophy will understand the better, and only those legislative pedants will refuse weight to it, who would venturously propose to give New Zealanders and Hottentots, in the starkness of their savage ignorance, the complex forms of the British Constitution.'

Mr. Rogers seems to think that the cases of giving a political constitution and a code of laws and morals are analogous. The Hottentots may be unfit to exercise any of the functions of legislation, but would it be too 'venturous' in an English ruler to try to teach them our English morality? Would such a person be a moral 'pedant'? Are the rules of civilised morals too complex for the comprehension of a New Zealander or a Hottentot? No one has ever complained of Moses not granting the Jews a modern constitution, but of his having taught them a cruel system of morals and customs, not calculated to humanise and civilise them, but to perpetuate 'the starkness of their savage ignorance,' and to heighten and stimulate some of their most objectionable habits and propensities with the sanction of divine authority.

The work of Michaelis, a learned German professor of Hebrew and divinity, to which Mr. Rogers refers, is a laborious Commentary on the Law of Moses, written expressly as a defence against infidel attacks. We will quote a short passage from his remarks on the singular absence of any penal or even prohibitory law to protect female virtue from violence, except in those cases when, from the woman being betrothed, a collateral injury would be inflicted on a male Hebrew. 'This may be attributed,' says he, 'to the deep debasement of the Jewish females in consequence of polygamy, and the custom of selling wives.' And soon after he says, 'Polygamy, and the right of the blood-avenger to attack and kill with impunity the person who had slain one of his relations, will hardly be reckoned among the laudable institutions of any government. It was a right which the legislator was here forced to tolerate, because it was connected with an imaginary sense of honour which he could not eradicate from the minds of the people.'

Now if Michaelis had made these excuses for Moses as a legislator of a barbarous period, himself a barbarian raised above the mass of the people he governed only by his superior talents and energy, they would have been admissible; but when offered, as they are, on behalf of an Almighty God, they become simply absurd. All the laws of Moses are delivered in the name of God; Jehovah was the legislator of the Hebrews, and according to Michaelis he was 'forced to tolerate' the

\* 'Commentaries on the Laws of Moses,' by John David Michaelis. Article 5.

impure and bloodthirsty customs of his chosen people on account of their rooted propensities and their 'imaginary sense of honour.'

Many savage nations under the English rule have had their 'imaginary sense of honour,' and yet, strange to say, we were not forced to tolerate it. We permit no blood-avenger to roam, dagger in hand, in search of his hereditary foe, still less do we sanction such a murderous custom by legislative permission. Hindoo widows formerly used to burn themselves on the funeral piles of their husbands. The prejudice in favour of the custom was strong, but it was a wicked custom, and the English government was not 'forced to tolerate it.' And what is still more strange, in many instances, after a short lapse of time, these ignorant nations begin to feel and to acknowledge the justice and advantages of our interference with their ancient habits, in spite of 'the starkness of their savage ignorance.'

But let us remark on the contradictions and absurdities in the character of the God of the Bible. This Almighty legislator, who is said to have interfered to stop the sun and moon in order to allow the Jews sufficient time to slaughter the Midianites, would not interfere to prevent murder, slavery, or polygamy: this Almighty Being, who interfered to harden the heart of Pharaoh, and to 'make obstinate' the spirit of the Canaanites, would not interfere to check the 'imaginary sense of honour,' which led to the perpetration of malignant hereditary feuds and murderous conflicts. Such is a fair sample of the 'relative wisdom disclosed' by the ponderous Commentary of Michaelis.

UNDECIMUS.

#### ROBERT OWEN'S EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY.

Two numerous and enthusiastic parties have been held in London to celebrate the eightieth birthday of the founder of English Socialism. These meetings gave evident signs of the progress of the Social principle. The first party was held on the 14th, at the Cranbourn Hotel, Cranbourn Street, Leicester Square—Mr. G. A. Fleming in the chair. Several foreign Socialists were present, among whom were General Hong, editor of *Kosmos*, Mr. Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, and Mons. and Mdlle. D'Arusmont. Mr. Owen, who appeared in excellent health and spirits, read a paper 'For May 14, 1851,' in which he says—'The early knowledge of nature's laws, in the formation of the human character, has been a constant source of unspeakable happiness through my life. It has made me to love human nature, and to be alone anxious for its permanent happiness. It has made me content, without the slightest fear or dread of after consequences, to die at any time, for which I have been made to be always ready and prepared.'

At John Street, on the 18th, more than 300 persons sat down to tea, and a large number assembled after the doors were opened to the public. Mr. W. D. Saull presided over this meeting. The first sentiment was introduced by Mr. Kydd and Mr. Turley: 'The People; may their teachers seek their elevation and moral improvement, that their long-cherished hopes and noblest aspirations may be fully realised.' The second—'Robert Owen, the philanthropist; may his efforts for the elevation of humanity meet with a response in all the nations of the earth'—was proposed by Mr. Robert Cooper, seconded by Mr. Alexander Campbell. Mr. Owen addressed the audience for a considerable time, in a speech full of vivacity and good feeling. He expressed his intention of endeavouring to prove to those who had called him a 'visionary,' that he was a 'practical man,' by drawing up a brief statement of his own views, which should be printed on *one sheet*. Mr. Owen is at least a *practical* instance of untiring energy and perseverance.

AUSTIN.

## Examination of the Press.

THE EXPERIENCE OF AN OLD METHODIST [concluded from last number.]—I tried in vain to retain such a hold of the Scripture as might consist with their notions; but at length truth compelled me to give up all belief in miraculous revelation, as mere pretence—or at least as old-world superstition. I may mention, in passing, soon after I had arrived at this stage, I heard you deliver some lectures on religion, wherein you gave some terribly hard hits at the mischievous superstitions of orthodoxy. But you were then, apparently, as I had been previously, wishful to stop at Unitarianism. I admired your zeal and determination to battle for truth, but felt convinced that you would have to undergo still further change—and I had not long to wait to witness it. I know, from my own former feelings towards others, and from what I have myself been the subject of more recently, that Christians have the most horrid ideas of what they call infidelity. In fact, up to my fortieth year, if there was one thing more horrible than all others, one thing that I feared, dreaded, and desired to shun more than all others, it was *infidelity*. Nor has the long and important transition been made without great mental suffering, and many a season of mental agony. I protest that I never gave up faith willingly; it was parting with my then best hopes. One consolation I had, ever since my earliest yieldings to common sense against superstition—I had got rid of all dread of everlasting fire and brimstone. That nightmare was removed from my soul. As it is a received opinion of nearly all believers, and was once an opinion of my own, that unbelief universally springs from a wicked nature, impatient of moral control, I will take occasion to say, that I trust all my associates give me credit for loving real virtue as strongly as ever I did; and for at least as strong and persevering desires—and efforts too—to be useful among my fellow-men as ever. It is true I can do some things which I formerly durst not do, simply because I now believe that we were made for this world as well as for the future state—that we were not made to pull long faces merely—and that *all* our faculties were made for exercise and use. As I wish to be candid, and to exhibit all the sides of my case fairly, I will confess that though I have, on the one side, got rid of all dread of hell, I have not, on the other side, so definite, and, as it were, *familiar* a connection with heavenly things, as Methodism inspires. I do not expect, with certainty, to ascend above the clouds, and, in the centre of the universe, or anywhere else, see God in a tangible shape; nor do I expect to see Jesus Christ actually sitting at God's right hand. I have no expectation that, actually present, both in body and soul, I shall spend an eternity amid assembled saints and angels, singing anthems and performing direct acts of adoration, &c., &c. Instead of all this, however, I have a strong hope that God, who has manifested his wisdom and beneficence so wonderfully and so overflowing in all nature, does not intend human life and being to close at the period we call death; though I pretend not to know how or in what kind of condition existence will be continued. I have so firm a trust that all will be well, and that Infinite Wisdom is at the helm of the universe, that I have no fear of laying my body, when weary with age, and worn with labour, in that bed which God has made for all his human children. As I have long thought the same, I have been much pleased with your idea that nature is the true revelation, and that nature is all-sufficient. And as geology, astronomy, and history, all conspire to prove, that physical nature generally, and man particularly, has been and is, gradually, and constantly, progressing, I feel a sublime pleasure in exercising a rational faith, which cannot

be displeasing to the Deity, in throwing my entire, and everlasting interests upon infinite goodness. Though I presume not to be God's favourite, I claim to be his child. Little did I think when, on my painful discovery, that I had been trusting in popular superstition; and when faith had died within me, little did I think that the immortal flower would again revive in such joyful freshness. My Methodist associates used to urge me—as the best antidote to doubt—not to *reason* but *believe*. I have found that an infinitely better faith has been the result of following enlightened reason, than that which arose from old-world ignorance, superstition, and blind belief. Speaking of the Methodists, I may acknowledge that, in one respect, they were useful to me. During the whole of the time that I was connected with them, I lived in a country village, where intellectual companionship was extremely scarce. All the travelling preachers who, in consecutive years, were placed in our circuit, I was acquainted with, as a matter of course. And, independently of their religious principles, &c., they were much better associates than I should otherwise have had. In fact, with some of them, I often held 'sweet counsel,' on subjects much more congenial to either their tastes or mine, than the splitting of orthodox hairs. In conclusion, allow me to say, that as I have not known you all through your life, I am at a loss to guess how in the world you, like me, were made a Methodist preacher. I cannot account for it by a comparison with my own case, for this reason—you are not only a man of intellect and energy, but of strong and determined independence. I am slow of thought, with perhaps too large love of approbation. I thank you heartily for having introduced Theodore Parker to me. His arguments are as convincing as his spirit is amiable; and that is saying much; for he is evidently one of the best of men. I had read Fox's work on 'Religious Ideas' with much satisfaction, and am greatly pleased with your plan of epitomising his and other good and extraordinary works.—*The People*.

THE VALUE OF EPITAPHS.—When the person is buried, the next care is to make his epitaph. They are generally reckoned best which flatter most; such relations therefore as have received most benefits from the defunct, discharge this friendly office, and generally flatter in proportion to their joy. When we read those monumental histories of the dead, it may be justly said that 'all men are equal in the dust; for they all appear equally remarkable for being the most sincere Christians, the most benevolent neighbours, and the honestest men of their time. To go through an European country, one would be apt to wonder how mankind could have so basely degenerated from such excellent ancestors. Every tomb pretends to claim your reverence and regret: some are praised for piety in those inscriptions, who never entered the temple until they were dead; some are praised for being excellent poets, who were never mentioned, except for their dullness, when living; others for sublime orators, who were never noted except for their impudence; and others still for military achievements, who were never in any skirmishes but with the watch. Some even make epitaphs for themselves, and bespeak the reader's good-will. It were indeed to be wished, that every man would early learn in this manner to make his own; that he would draw it up in terms as flattering as possible, and that he would make it the employment of his whole life to deserve it.—*Goldsmith's Citizen of the World*, Letter 12.

FURTHER PAPAL AGGRESSION.—A letter from Rome, dated May 1st, says that the President of the Propaganda, Cardinal Franzoni, has just issued an appeal to all Italy, calling upon all good Catholics to subscribe funds for the erection of a Roman Catholic cathedral in London. The projected edifice is to be dedicated to St. Peter, and schools for boys and girls attached to it.—*Leader*.

## The Hebrew Religion: whence Derived.

BY EUGENE.

[Concluded from last number.]

‘HOWEVER this may be, a ritual religion they were now to have: and in this ritual they must have their moral government. Moses had been compelled to surrender his loftiest aim and hope—that of raising the people above a ceremonial worship. His object henceforth plainly was to elevate the ceremonial worship into as good a moral government as its nature would permit. In the great concern of all—that of the Sanctions of the Moral Law which he gave, Moses made his third marked departure from the religion of Egypt. The first was his laying open the Mysteries: the second, his declaring the Supreme a tutelary God: and the third was his offering, as the Sanction of the Moral Law, Temporal Retribution instead of Future Reward and Punishment.....Moses saw that the doctrine of future reward and punishment was disbelieved by the learned, and was so far made a deception to the people as that the inevitable suffering which arises from sin, and the peace which attends goodness, were concealed from them under the disguise of arbitrary punishment and reward. The Initiated appear to have believed in a future life, and in the natural retribution by which, from their very constitution, the virtuous enjoy and the vicious suffer: but, in as far as they declared these things in the form of divine promises and threats, contingent on future conduct, they deceived the people; and Moses as carefully avoided perpetrating this evil as any other connected with the Mysteries. The second way of meeting the difficulty of the existence of evil was no less familiar to him, from his position through life; the supposition of two opposing deities. He had seen in Egypt how from being brothers, children of one father, Osiris and Typho, Good and Evil, had become foes; and he had witnessed the moral mischief which arises from the belief of a malevolent spiritual being. We find therefore in the Mosaic system no more trace of an evil spiritual being, hostile to God and man, than of a future life of reward and punishment. The serpent in Eden is, in the history, a mere serpent, altogether Egyptian in its con-

ception, and bearing no relation whatever to the Evil Being with which superstition afterwards connected it. Moses nowhere hints at such a notion as that of an express Author of Evil. On the contrary his doctrine, consistent from end to end of his teachings, is that which Isaiah expressed afterwards in the plain words: ‘I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things.’

And Moses boldly cut the knot by presenting as a Sanction for the moral law, the doctrine that happiness and prosperity follow obedience, misery and adversity disobedience to God—a doctrine founded on a great truth. Substitute for ‘God,’ the ‘Laws of Nature;’ moral, physical, and intellectual, and George Coombe’s ‘Constitution of Man’ may be read as a commentary upon the doctrine of Moses.

The cosmogony of the Jews, at least a part of it, and that the older, is decidedly Egyptian. Miss Martineau says of the representations in the Tomb of Osirei at Thebes:—‘It is impossible to look upon these representations of the serpent; of the tree of life, of which those who ate were made as gods; of the moving spirit of the Creator, and of the universally prevalent ideas of the original spread of water; the separation of the land from the water; the springing of vegetation, and the sudden appearance of animals on the new surface; and the separation of the upper air into regions of abode, without seeing whence was derived the first of the two accounts of the creation given in the Book of Genesis; that in which, not Jehovah, but the Elohim were engaged, who would be understood by the Egyptian instructors of Moses to be Kneph and Pthah—the Presiding Spirit, and the Forming-Intellect of the Supreme. The other, and very different, account has little that is Egyptian in its character, and was probably not learned at Heliopolis or Thebes.’

Again: ‘In their theory of the formation of the world, they (the Egyptians) believed that when the formless void of

eternal matter began to part off into realms, the igneous elements ascending and becoming a firmament of fiery bodies, and the heavier portions sinking and becoming compacted into earth and sea, the earth gave out animals—beasts and reptiles; an idea evidently derived from their annual spectacle of the coming forth of myriads of living creatures from the soil of their valley, on the subsidence of the flood. When we remember that to them the Nile was the sea, and so called by them, and that they had before them the spectacle which is seen nowhere else, of the springing of the green herb after the separation of the waters from the land, we shall see how different their view of the creation must be from any which we could naturally form. . . . .

The last point of similarity, evidently derived, is that of the ritual of the Jews. We have seen that Moses was compelled to abandon his original design of doing without ceremonial worship, for the Hebrews, fresh from Egypt, could not be prevailed upon to give up their superstitions. Where should Moses get a ritual and a worship except from the land in whose temples he had graduated in ritual and ceremony, quite as much as in wisdom and philosophy? He accordingly 'gave them a ritual Egyptian in its forms, seasons, and associations, but with Jehovah alone for its object.'

'He had all the requisite knowledge of Egyptian worship and ways. He had at his command, among the "mixed multitude," Egyptian artificers; besides that many of the Hebrews themselves were no doubt skilled artisans. So he treated them as they compelled him to do. He offered them a new set of Commandments, eight out of ten of which were about feasts and offerings, and sacrifices and holy days. He fixed upon the days of Egyptian feasts, knowing that the people would at all events observe the days of New Moon, First-fruits, &c., and securing this observance for Jehovah by special ordinance. He set them to work upon a tabernacle—a moveable temple for the Desert, as nearly as possible resembling an Egyptian temple. He made them an ark—exactly like what the traveller in Egypt sees sculptured in the processions of the priests, on the walls of palaces and temples finished before Abraham was born.—He permitted to them an oracle, the Urim and Thummim, derived immediately from an Egyptian

model. And, most mournful to him of all, he had to give them a priesthood, like that which they had been accustomed to look up to as sacred. He had hoped to make of them a high-caste nation, and had delivered to them the announcement "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation."

And these passages are still stronger evidence:—'When Moses had failed to satisfy the people that Jehovah should have no meaner temple than that of the heavens and the earth, and when it therefore became necessary to prepare for him a visible abiding place, there could be no doubt about what kind of temple it must be. The Hebrews were living, like the Egyptians, under a theocracy; and the temples of Egypt, palaces for the Divine King, must be the model. "The Israelites," says Dr. Kitto, "were taught to feel that the tabernacle was not only the temple of Jehovah, but the palace of their King; that the table supplied with wine and shew-bread was the royal table; that the altar was the place where the provisions of the monarch were prepared; that the priests were the royal servants, and were bound to attend not only to sacred but also to secular affairs, and were to receive, as their reward, the first tithes, which the people, as subjects, were led to consider as part of the revenue which was due to God, their immediate sovereign. Other things, of a less prominent and important nature, had reference to the same great end." . . . . There is no reason to suppose that the tabernacle was the first portable sanctuary ever made. The eastern idolaters of the old world used to carry about with them the shrines of their idols in their wanderings; and the prophet Amos and the martyr Stephen charge the Israelites with having done even this. Travellers tell us that at this day the eastern tartars carry about a tabernacle, which they set up for purposes of worship, and take to pieces again when they migrate. This is probably as old as any other nomade custom. Except in its portableness, the tabernacle of the Hebrews was as like as it could be made to an Egyptian temple. It had its circuit wall, represented by a curtained enclosure: it had its open court; and then the edifice itself, in the form of an oblong square. It had the two chambers which are the indispensable parts of all Egyptian temples—the



Holy Place; and within this, and very small, the Holy of Holies. The coverings which formed the ceiling and walls of these chambers were embroidered with figures of cherubim, as the ceilings and walls of Egyptian temples had sculptures and paintings of heavenly creatures. If we may take the description in the 1st chapter of Ezekiel as the Hebrew description of cherubim, nothing can be more like the lion-headed, hawk-headed, ox-headed, winged images, in the Egyptian sculptures.....Throughout all these ages, the Holy of Holies was in the highest sense a sanctuary. No one entered it but the most privileged of the priests, and it contained nothing but the symbol of the presence of the god. In the Egyptian temples, this symbol was the shrine; a chest or closet, containing a sacred pledge, and surmounted by an idol form on its lid or top; that idol form being often guarded by winged creatures, two of the wings stretching upwards, and two covering their bodies, as Ezekiel describes. The guardian hawk and ibis, and the wings of Isis Protectrix precisely resemble this description; and indeed the ark of the Hebrews is exactly the Egyptian shrine, with the omission of the idol figure in the Mercy-seat. When carried by poles on the shoulders of priests, habited much like those of Egypt, trumpeters leading and following the procession, with their rams' horns at their mouths, as on occasion of the summons of Jericho, nothing can be imagined more like the sculpture on the walls at Medjenet Haboo, where the shrine, priests, and trumpeters make a part of the coronation procession. The Sacrifices offer more points of resemblance than perhaps any other part of the institutions of Moses. The oblations or gifts were the same, and the libations. The Hebrews brought cakes, meal, wafers and wine, turtle-doves and young pigeons, exactly as we see that Egyptians brought them in days when no Hebrew had yet entered the Nile Valley. Swine were abhorred by the Egyptians as the tenements of evil spirits, from the earliest days. The practice of the sacrificer laying his hands on the head of the victim, and confessing his sins, thus charging the head with imprecations, is precisely what Herodotus relates as the Egyptian practice; and so is the immolation of the red heifer. If the Egyptian animal was not entirely red, if a

single black or white hair was found upon it, it was rejected, because Apis was black, and Typho red. The Hebrew sacrifice was to be "a red heifer, without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke." "In the Thebaid," says Sir G. Wilkinson, "the sheep was considered not merely as an emblem, but as the most sacred of all animals." "Strabo, Clemens, and many other writers, notice the sacred character of the sheep; and the two former state that it was looked upon with the same veneration in the Saïte nome as in the neighbourhood of Thebes." And such resemblances are found throughout the whole institution.'

The historian of a later day, writing a narrative, *à la* Macaulay, for effect, in order to heighten the interest and intensify the 'situation,' attributes to God the honour of having invented these patterns, this tabernacle, those sacrifices and sacrificing priests! It is thus that we see Moses through the enchanted glass of fable, with a halo round his head as he descends from the solitudes of Sinai, after a personal interview with the Lord. It is thus that, through the same medium, comes the celebrated phrase, 'And the Lord said unto Moses.' Doubtless Moses left documents behind him—but it is not clear that he left any books. The scribe or scribes who compiled the history of the Hebrews acted as modern historians love to act—they accounted for everything; magnifying the greatness of their origin by the narration of miracles and prophesies; and justifying the claim to a tutelary God by a history of the many proofs he had given of his devoted care and attention. I do not say that the scribes wilfully did these things; but that these things were done. I cannot account for them. The Law was not pretended to have been found in the Ark until the time of Josiah; the Passover was not known to have been celebrated until after the Law had been made known. The priesthood was not completely established until the reign of Jehoida. But when it was established it became worthy of its origin, thoroughly stamped with the impress of Egypt. Then we are told the first four books of the Pentateuch were compiled, and the book of Deuteronomy in the time of Josiah.

It is remarked by Miss Martineau that there is an astonishing similarity

between Osiris and the expected Messiah of the Jews—another derived idea. The Alexandrian Christians have hung the mantle of Osiris on the body of Jesus of Nazareth, and endowed the son of the carpenter with the character and attributes of the Egyptian deity.

The 'primary attribute (of the Supreme God) his Goodness, was embodied in Osiris, who left his place in the presence of the Supreme, took a human form (though not becoming a human being), went about the world, doing good to men, sank into death in a conflict with the Power of Evil; rose up to spread blessings over the land of Egypt and the world, and was appointed Judge of the Dead, and Lord of the heavenly region, while present with his true worshippers on earth, to do them good. Such were the history and functions of Osiris, as devoutly recorded by the Egyptians of several thousand years ago. And here, in Philæ, was his sepulchre, where the faithful came in pilgrimage, from the mighty Pharaoh to the despised goat-herd, for a long course of centuries.—He was especially ordered for other reasons than his benefactions: as being the only manifestation on earth of the Supreme God. This made him superior to the Eight great gods, after whom he ranked on other accounts. How the manifestation was made in a human form without an adoption of human nature, was one of the chief Egyptian mysteries; the ideas of which will now, I fear, never be offered to our apprehension.—Upon his death, he passed into the region of the dead—(borne there, as the sculptures represent, by the four genii of Hades)—and then, having passed through its stages, was raised to the function of Judge.—Among the allusive names of Osiris were those of "Opener of good," "Manifester of grace," and "Revealer of truth:" and the description of him was, in the ancient words, "full of grace and truth." He obtained the victory after his death over the Evil Principle which had destroyed him: and it was in his name, which they then assumed, that the virtuous, after judgment, entered into the state of blessedness which they shared with him. The departed, men and women alike, were called Osiris: this spiritual name betokening that they were now in that state where sex was abolished, where no

marriage existed, but human beings had become pure as the heaven-born inhabitants.....It is impossible not to perceive that Osiris was to the old Egyptians what the Messiah is to be to the Jews; and what Another has been to the Christians. The nature, character, and offices of Osiris, and the sacred language concerning him are so coincident with those most interesting to Christians, as to compel a very careful attention on the part of inquirers into Egyptian antiquities.....It is a fact which ought to be attended to while considering the various solutions offered, that the character and offices of Osiris were certainly the same in the centuries which preceded the birth of Abraham—in the very earliest times known to us—as after the deaths of Pythagoras and Plato. This is proved by the sculptures in the oldest monuments.'

These extracts and observations point to a subject which at least is worthy of a rigid examination by the Christians. Whatever moral beauty Christianity may have revealed, or caused to be revealed to the world, it is to most men disfigured and polluted by the remains of the gross superstitions, the symbolical beliefs, and the fetish propensities of paganism.

The conclusions to which these remarks point are these: that Egypt was the mother of religion, that the religion of the Jews was derived from the religion of the Egyptians; that, as a consequence of that derivation, the idea of a special revelation in the case of the Jews is completely destroyed; and that Christianity, as a matter of course, shares the fate of Judaism; for Christianity, taken as an isolated fact, originating with Jesus of Nazareth, can have no special claims.

We owe this new proof in favour of Rationalism to the disinterested researches of a few men who have found in the hieroglyphic language of the Temples, Tombs, and Pyramids of Egypt a living record of a mighty race, and made that record plain to us. These men are great authorities, profound scholars, and indefatigable inquirers. They lived for years in Egypt; they made their study, their bed, their daily and nightly abode, the Tombs on the banks of the Nile; and though they have done much, more yet remains.

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

### PRINCIPLES OF BELIEF HELD BY A SEARCHER AFTER TRUTH.

*To the Editor of the Reasoner.*

SIR,—I believe in one supreme Being who created all things. I do not believe in a future state, because I can see no object in man's living again—neither do I think it would answer any good or wise end. I look upon the idea of a creature like man living in any state, or under any form, for ever, as an impossibility and an absurdity. I do not believe the book called the Bible to be the work of the supreme Being who created the universe; and for this reason, because the works of creation—such as the revolution of the earth upon its axis, the motion of the heavenly bodies (as they are called), the succession of seasons, &c.—are beautiful, grand, and harmonious, while the Bible is a book full of contradictions and absurdities. I do not believe the supreme Artificer ever called out of a place called heaven, or anywhere else, to men upon this earth, and told them to write this or the other. I do not believe that Moses, or any other of the so-called inspired writers, was any more inspired than myself, or any other man of the present day. I look upon the creation of the world as given by Moses as a miserable production, scarcely fit for a nursery tale. I cannot conceive a being like the Author of all things taking six days to do what he could have done in a moment, and afterwards resting on the seventh, like a common mechanic, or labourer—thereby implying that that Being was tired with the work he had done.

I look upon the story of Adam and Eve and the serpent as a beautiful allegory, having reference to the Virgo of the Zodiac, the herdsman who appears to be tempted by her. I believe if there ever had been such a Garden, and the Almighty had placed an Angel with a flaming sword to protect it, the place would be in existence at the present time. I do not believe an almighty Being ever created man for the express purpose of tormenting him, and for the childish offence of eating an apple. I do not believe that the Author of all things ever 'repented him that he had made man,' and drowned all the world, with a very few exceptions. I believe that the story of Noah and the Deluge was taken from Ovid.

I know that the Being who made the universe must of necessity be a kind and benevolent being, whereas the God of the Bible is a monster of cruelty and injustice. I do not believe the God of nature ever created devils to torment man after death. I believe there are no devils half so bad or revengeful as the priests of the present day.

I do not believe that man was born in sin, as I cannot conceive a good and merciful being making anything sinful or bad. I believe that scarcely any man is naturally bad or wicked; I believe for the most part man is made bad by infamous laws made by worse men. I believe that the priests, persecuting their fellow-men for merely believing according to their own honest convictions, has been a fertile source of crime, from the fact of such persecution driving many good men from their position in society. I hold those passages in the Bible where it pretends a merciful God ordered a set of barbarians to slaughter thousands of their fellow-creatures, admitting them to have been a trifle more barbarous than themselves, as horrible and dreadful blasphemy. It is quite contrary to my idea to believe that a merciful God ever ordered 'Women big with child to be ripped up,' or that

he should take a share in the spoil after a battle of either 'changes of raiment or the asses;' had it been written the priests' share instead of the Lord's, it would have been much nearer the truth. I agree with Paine, that if a man was to take the Bible, and with a pen, whenever he came to the words 'and the Lord spake unto so and so,' and write the priest above said unto the priest below, it would be more in accordance with the fact. Not only do I believe that to accept the Bible as the word of God can be productive of no good, but, on the contrary, by instilling false notions of the Deity into the minds of men, is productive of a vast amount of evil. Men would never, in my opinion, have taken so much pleasure in cutting each other's throats, even for the sake of that miserable principle called faith, had they not believed in the Almighty having set the example. Not only do I believe the Almighty to have had nothing whatever to do with the book called the Bible, but I believe it to have been written by bad and ignorant Jewish priests for the whole and sole view of enslaving the minds of men for their own base purposes. I believe the whole of the so-called prophecies in the Old Testament to be fallacies, as every one can, by a little tracing out, be found to refer to things happening at the time they were written, and to have no reference whatever to events which were to take place many hundreds of years afterwards. Take, for instance, Isaiah, where it says 'a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.' The story is all finished and done with in a few succeeding verses, and could have no possible reference to the birth of any supposed Saviour, which was to take place some hundreds of years afterwards. As I disbelieve totally and entirely in original sin and the powers of any devil over man, of course there can be no occasion for me to believe in a Saviour. So I look upon the story of Jesus Christ as being the son of the Almighty as absurd and ridiculous. That such a man did live is a possibility, and quite within the range of probability I will freely admit; but as a reasonable being I feel bound to deny the Almighty having anything to do with him. I look upon the ridiculous story of the conception as quite as absurd as the story of Jupiter having connection with Leda in the form of a swan, between which and a dove, or Holy Ghost, there is but little difference. I believe according to Dupuis, Volney, and others, that the story of Christ and all his miraculous doings is only an allegorical representation of the sun. As regards the miracles that he performed I treat them as absurdities, well knowing how easy it is to impose upon the credulity of mankind, particularly in the darker ages, when we in our own time have seen people ready enough to be gulled by imposition—for instance, Mad Tom of Canterbury or the winking virgin of Rimini. My own firm and honest conviction is, that the whole of the Old and New Testament is totally and entirely the work of man, and that the Almighty had nothing whatever to do with the matter, and to believe in the truth of either I consider degrading to man as a rational creature, and insulting to a supreme and perfect Being. To the oft asked question, 'Why has the system lasted so long if untrue,' I reply, that the many millions a year basely appropriated for the express purpose, as well as the power and position its supporters are enabled to maintain, is quite a sufficient answer, to say nothing of the natural credulity of the greater portion of mankind who are fond of the marvellous.

Had the Bible been in reality the work of the Almighty, and necessary to the salvation of mankind, I doubt not it would have been written in such unmistakable terms that all created beings would have believed in it: as it is, I would just as soon put implicit faith in the Koran, which is scarcely so absurd and unlikely a production. I look upon the whole code of morals, so called, as found in the New

Testament, if acted upon would totally annihilate society. Take, for instance, the 'turning of the cheek to the smiter,' or 'giving the cloak to the man who steals your coat.'

I know that, for the opinion I have stated, I shall be called all sorts of names, such as infidel, blasphemer, &c., but I care not: the priests imprisoned Galileo for saying the earth revolved; all men who have lifted up their voices against priestly power and intolerance have been abused and persecuted. I have stated my own belief as clearly and concisely as possible, with the whole and sole view of doing good to my fellow-men, by assisting them to see through the imposition which has for so long a time been practised upon them, feeling grateful daily and hourly myself for being emancipated from such soul-enslaving tyranny.

In conclusion, I believe that time always was and always will be, and that year will follow year through countless ages, and I have come to the conclusions I have stated from convictions based upon my own reasoning powers, after having, as far as I am able, looked at both sides of the question for and against a belief in the Scriptures! and I shall, when my appointed time to die comes, resign my breath into the hands of the Being who gave it, without a fear, without a doubt, without a dread; and even in the event of its pleasing that Being that I should exist again in some other state or form, I have no fear whatever that it will be in a state of misery or torture.

[The writer of this paper belongs to a class of Christians with whom we rarely have the honour of communication. With his Theism of course we disagree, but we quite concur in his desire to rationalise the popular idea of Deity as set forth in mis-called Revelation, and cheerfully aid him by publishing his 'Principles of Belief.'—Ed.]

#### A CONVERT THROUGH EXAMINING THE BIBLE.

SIR,—Apart from any special arguments which might be offered on the question of unbelief, I know of no better way of answering that class of religious enthusiasts who are ever ready to question the propriety of any dissent from their own views and opinions, than by giving an outline of individual experience in that much censured method of 'living without God in the world.' It is said that a man destitute of the 'faith which is in Jesus,' is a being lost to all sense of shame and rectitude, and that to a man who has turned his back upon religion, there is nothing left him here or hereafter but condemnation. Love, law, order, honesty, nor truth, are allowed to be in the possession of him who doubts the existence of a Creator. This is certainly bad enough, but there is something else which, in my estimation, is much worse—home is insulted, when it is said that to be infidel one must be a bad parent and a bad friend, when the wife and children of the infidel are treated with mock pity; and it is in fact declared vice must necessarily exist with infidelity. Such objections, I think, may best be met by personal experience. I take to myself no merit in being an atheist more than this, that when I began to doubt the truth of revelation, I spared no pains to have my doubts settled on one side or the other: to trifle with a question like this I considered unpardonable. My faith at first (which was none of the smallest) revolted on a further examination of the subject, and after a struggle it yielded to a 'little reason.' This I say from my own experience at the time, that the 'book of life' will make more infidels than any other book will, if it be only read intelligently. My convictions, after becoming fully acquainted with this book, certainly rested not Zionwards; and it

is a matter of deep surprise now to me how I could have passed over the thousand and one objectionable passages in that book, in the thousand and one times I had *really* read it. Years have passed since then, and I can now honestly declare that I tried every means which reason might dictate to perceive the beauty of Christianity, so much eulogised in the pulpit, to find out some unwarrantable cause for the changes which spring up in my convictions, giving the religion of my fathers, which was ever dear to me, the benefit of a last lingering doubt, and turning back upon this argument and that argument with a double desire of knowing the truth. And yet I did not read many infidel books, neither having the means nor the inclination to procure them. What I did read was sufficient to assist me in coming to a conclusion. I felt that I did not possess the ability to justify anything higher than private controversy, hence I did not consider it necessary to know the opinions of early infidels, unless reference was made to them by present writers; but as I thought it essentially necessary to understand the particular features of modern infidelity, I examined them attentively and patiently, and the conclusion I came to, after I had decided upon the insufficiency of religion as a moral regenerator, was to reckon myself a confirmed unbeliever, nor deny my principles whatever might be the contingency.

Why I wish to be so explicit with these matters is, because of the frequent accusation that infidelity is the effect of wholesale vice, and that it inevitably leads to destruction. As to it being preceded by evil conduct I am at present prepared to deny, and, on the contrary, can honestly declare that the word of God itself, and the conversation of an esteemed friend, were the principal causes of my unbelief having existence at all—and to tell me that I read the Scriptures to my own condemnation can have no influence with me. I read them with my prejudices, willing to be guided by my reason. I read them also for the purpose of clearing away my doubts of their worth.

The cause that I assign for there not being more unbelievers is, that the Bible is the last book that is properly read. It is better circulated, but more doomed to moth and dust than any other book you can name. In very numerous instances, I have quoted passages from this book which have been more than questioned. Can the same be said of any other book that has been read? The truth is, that religious faith materially affects the senses; and while we have this astonishing book in our hands we not only lose sight of ourselves, but we also lose sight of our subject. The only means by which we can extricate ourselves from this sort of mesmeric study, is to begin by doubting the truth of the text.

Such is a prominent portion of my experience as a truth-seeker in religion. I must, however, say, I willed it not to be an atheist, I would rather have been a Christian, but it is otherwise. A man who would condemn another man for his honest conviction, perverts the best privilege it is our common lot to possess.

Bradford.

M. R.

#### MR. ADAMS'S ADDRESSES IN VICTORIA PARK.

SIR,—This morning I was in Victoria Park and heard Mr. Adams speak. Towards the end of his discourse he inquired whether, in the crowd he was addressing, there were no Christians who would come forward and dispute any point with him. The challenge was not accepted, and at this Mr. Adams expressed his satisfaction, because it argued, as he thought, that no Christians were present. After the lapse of a short time he repeated the challenge, and hinted that if any Christians were present, their silence might imply a want of confidence on their part in the soundness of their doc-

trines. Upon this a Christian did come forward, and although he was no match for Mr. Adams, so far as debating was concerned, yet from his earnestness of manner, his humility, and the evident benevolence of his motives, I doubt not that what he said had great weight with his auditory, and, in a great measure, counteracted many an impression that may have been made by Mr. Adams in his preaching. If I had thought that I could do as well as the Christian above referred to, I would have accepted Mr. Adams's challenge, but never having spoken in public, I wanted confidence, and therefore remained silent.

My silence did not arise from any doubt on my part as to the truth of the principles I advocate, and, as a proof of this, I beg to say that if you will give insertion in the pages of the *Reasoner* to a few observations I could make in reply to what I have heard recently in Victoria Park, with regard to the morality contained in the first dozen or half dozen verses of Christ's sermon on the mount, I will send them to you. I am not a scholar, and shall not be able to say one-half of what doubtless could be said on the subject. However I will do my best, and if no other end be answered, this public promise to do what I can, through the medium of your periodical, to defend Christianity, will satisfy Mr. Adams that there are men in the world who are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

JUVENIS.

[If the comments of Juvenis are tolerably well done, we shall insert them. Will he please accompany them with his name and address?—Ed.]

STATEMENT OF THE RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE OF THE RATIONAL SOCIETY, FROM MAY 1850 TO MAY 1851.

RECEIVED.		£	s.	d.	PAID.		£	s.	d.
Balance in hand May 17th, 1850	..	0	5	7	Paid for postages, &c. during the year..	0	2	0	
General fund received, viz. :—					„ on account of cash advanced for				
London, A 1 .. .. .	..	0	3	6	‘Herald of Progress’ .. .. .	1	5	6	
Lambeth .. .. .	..	0	9	0					
Sheffield .. .. .	..	0	15	0					
					Cash in hand .. .. .	0	5	7	
		£1	13	1					£1 13 1
ASSETS.					LIABILITIES.				
Cash in hand .. .. .	..	0	5	7	Balance due on account of ‘Herald of				
					Progress’ .. .. .	2	1	3	
					THOS. WHITAKER, Hon. Fin. Sec.				

GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.  
 June 1st [7½], Samuel M. Kydd, ‘On the Laws of the Hebrews.’  
 Hackney Literary and Scientific Institution, Mermaid Assembly Rooms.—June 4th [8], a lecture.  
 Hall of Science, City Road.—June 1st [7½], Thomas Cooper, ‘Constantine the Great.’  
 Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—May 30th [8], a Discussion. June 1st [7½], a lecture.  
 Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O’Brien, ‘Home and Foreign Politics.’ Every Sunday [7½], on ‘Moral and Social Science.’  
 Free Inquirers’ Society, British Coffee Rooms, Edgeware Road.—June 1st [7], a lecture.  
 Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.  
 City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—June 2nd [8½], discussion. Subject, ‘Does an all-wise Providence govern the Universe?’

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 The Revolution which began in Heaven: a Dramatic Vision of Time, by H. Lucas .. 0 6  
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 London: James Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster-row.

### Our Open Page.

MR. WATSON will soon recover entirely. But many will learn with regret, that both Mrs. and Mr. Martin have suffered in health a long time.

Mr. Holyoake returned to town on Saturday evening, and he has to acknowledge the various newspaper reports that have been forwarded.

A M. Gobin was, in 1826, sentenced in France to six months' imprisonment, and a fine of 600 francs, for accidentally hitting a statue of the Virgin Mary, while shooting at a partridge.

The *Times*, of May 15, says that 'It is not perhaps generally known that the men who deserted from the Cape Mounted Rifles have relapsed from Christianity in a body, and returned to their original Paganism, the labours of the missionaries having been lost upon them; and the knowledge they have acquired of the use of arms, has rendered them more dangerous enemies than they otherwise would have been.'

The Bombay papers announce the decision of the first case under the recent Act, which established Liberty of Conscience in India. A man of the name of Narayun Ramchunder became a convert to the Christian faith, but could not prevail on his wife to follow him, and she in consequence separated herself from him, carrying away her child, a boy of seven years of age. Narayun Ramchunder, anxious to recover possession of his child, instituted a suit against his wife before the Principal Sudder Ameen. That officer decreed, that the plaintiff by adopting Christianity 'had committed no act that rendered him morally unfit for the exercise of the natural right of the father to the guardianship of the child,' and decreed the case in his favour. The mother of the boy appealed to the judge of Ahmednuggur. That gentleman being more deeply versed in the peculiarities of Hindoo ecclesiastical law, decided that, according to the Shaster, 'a Brahmin renouncing his religion becomes an outcast, and resigns and forfeits all his civil rights, comprising the guardianship of his children lawfully begotten prior to such renunciation.' The child was, therefore, given back to his Hindoo mother; but the question was not allowed to rest here. The father appealed to the Sudder Court at Bombay, and in the meantime, Act 21 of 1850, the much-abused *Lex Loci*, had become law. The sitting judge recorded the following minute, which sets the question finally at rest, and will be gratefully remembered as the first application in Bombay of the great law of religious freedom. 'Since the Decree now appealed against was passed, Act 21 of 1850 has become the law of the land. This law clearly provides, that any law or usage that inflicts on any person, forfeiture of rights of property by reason of his or her renouncing the communion of any religion, or being deprived of caste, shall cease to be enforced as law. This being so, it appears to me that the special appellant under the existing law cannot be debarred from exercising the rights of a parent over his infant child, by reason of his renunciation of the Hindoo religion, but, on the contrary, is entitled to all the natural rights and privileges of a parent.'

Many newspapers addressed to Australia, New Zealand, and the United States of America, having been recently detained at London, in consequence of the postage due for their conveyance not having been paid, it has become necessary to call attention to the regulation under which a postage of one penny, either in money or by stamp, must be paid in advance upon each newspaper sent to those countries, and to point out that, unless such postage be paid, the newspapers cannot be forwarded. Postmasters desire the utmost publicity to be given to this announcement.



# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## DEFENCE OF OPINION AGAINST THE CLERGY OF LANCASTER.

WHEN returning from Sheffield last, I came by the Great Northern line from curiosity to see it, as I had never ridden upon it; on that day the train by which I should have come up the Midland failed to arrive at the Euston station when due—some accident had occurred. On going to Glasgow, a spring under the carriage in which I sat broke in the night, and it was luckily discovered before our necks were broken. These would be called providential interferences if they happened to a priest.

Sometimes I relate instances in which I enjoy a laugh at an opponent's cost; I will relate one now wherein an opponent may, if he pleases, have a laugh at the expense of myself. On the Sunday morning when the broken spring of the aforesaid carriage was discovered, we were desired to get out. On doing so, I asked one on the platform where we stopped what place we were at. 'Lancaster' was the reply. It had so happened that I had arranged with 'Julius Aspirant,' who had corresponded with me, and whom I did not know, to meet me as I passed through, and talk over the Rev. Mr. Fleming's letter in the *Lancaster Guardian*. In a similar manner, and for a similar purpose, I was to meet a stranger at Carlisle. That I might be known, I agreed to walk on the platform with my hat in my hand. Getting out on what I supposed to be the Lancaster platform, I walked up and down hatless. It was scarcely daybreak; after travelling all night one felt susceptible of the cold, and the blast that poured down from bleak hills near assured me that the cold was no delusion. Seeing no one as I expected, I took a walk toward, while the new carriage was found and connected with the train. Having selected the coffee house in which I thought they kept the best fires, I determined to take up quarters there when I went to reply to the Rev. Mr. Fleming. Then, standing on an eminence, I looked over the town to where I supposed the reverend gentleman's parsonage to be situated, and commenced an apostrophe to that unconscious individual. 'Is not ignorance sometimes bliss?' I exclaimed, as I contemplated the pious lecturer on Infidel literature reposing in utter ignorance that the enemy (the 'arch enemy,' as an unsophisticated deacon declared me a few weeks ago) was so near. He who ought to have been on his watch-tower, lest the invader should break into Zion like a thief in the night, was reposing in indolent dreams. But no doubt, thought I, the good man turneth uneasily on his bed as the shadow of the Evil One falleth upon his window, darkening his room, and disturbing his slumbers. And at this point I was turning into a soliloquy that might have done credit to Ossian, when a huge, bladder-faced Hodge, who was running down to the station to meet a sweetheart going off by the train, precipitated himself round a corner against me, and almost knocked me over, and broke my apostrophe into two parts. 'Hallo, old fellow,' I ejaculated, 'where are you off to in such an irregular way?' 'To the Preston station,' he answered; 'I shall be

too late.' 'To *what* station?' I gasped; 'what place is this?' 'PRESTON,' he replied, with what breath he had left. And true enough it was; and I had been apostrophising my reverend opponent at Preston instead of Lancaster. Whether Mr. Fleming felt any inexplicable uneasiness that morning I have never learned. I am afraid not.

It seemed like bursting upon a new world, as we passed over the borders of England and Scotland, and screamed away through hill and dale and torrent, as the morning broke upon the wide landscape around, and the sun, like the smile of affection on the face of age, fell on the hoary snow-clad mountain tops, and set their white faces laughing above their dark and solemn breasts. No worshipper in bird-cage temples, under skies of smoke, could inspire half the joy, good-will, and peace which the beauty of such a morning awakens. By the time I did reach Lancaster I had forgotten all about the Rev. Mr. Fleming, and was only recalled to a consciousness of his existence by the appearance of my friend, 'Julius A.' A fall of snow obscured everything as we reached Lanark, but sunshine won the victory again, and by one o'clock we reached Glasgow, where by accident it was as dry as bright. A party of friends had provided a cab for me at the station, and I started again for Paisley, where I met Pater and Mater Glassford about three o'clock. Thus supping at my own table in London on Saturday evening, I was in time to dine in Paisley the next afternoon.

Passing over three weeks spent in Scotland, of which I shall give an account, our narrative takes us to Lancaster, in which town the placards have appeared as quoted last week. Instead of any Committee being formed, as I had hoped would be the case, I found, in the *Lancaster Gazette* of May 17, the following ominous welcome, entitled

'INFIDEL LECTURERS, AND HOW TO TREAT THEM.

'With feelings of grief, not unmingled with sentiments of another kind, we have seen announced upon the walls of our town the delivery of a series of lectures in defence of atheistical opinions. We find, further, by the same advertisement, that we are indebted for this truly pestilent visitation to a challenge thrown out by the Rev. Mr. Fleming, minister of the Independent Chapel. Mr. Fleming has been engaged in lecturing upon infidelity in the town, and he seems to have made some allusion to a certain publication issued by one Holyoake, and, either at the time or at the conclusion of his lectures, thought proper to declare, through the medium of the press, that if the person called Holyoake felt himself aggrieved, he had better come down to Lancaster and maintain his cause, and he (Mr. Fleming) would undertake to answer him. Of the indiscretion manifested in this parade of defiance it is impossible to entertain a doubt. Before taking such a step Mr. Fleming was bound to consult the feelings and opinions of the town. We feel perfectly satisfied that if Mr. Fleming had condescended to make the necessary inquiry in this regard, he would have found a thousand voices raised against a course of proceeding so obviously injurious to the best interests of society. The man Holyoake we know nothing about, but we will answer for it he is an adept at his craft, and well practised in the art of making the worst appear the better reason. With a ready tongue and a well stored armoury of infidel weapons at command, such a man will never want hearers or (shame to think) admirers, whilst human nature continues what it is. The way to defeat the purposes of the professed atheist is never to defile one's sense of hearing by listening to his satanic sophistries: for, after all, the main-spring of his actions is human pride, and that accursed attribute of our fallen condition is never so effectually rebuked as when

encountered by the passive resistance of a contemptuous neglect. We, therefore, beg and beseech all such as do us the honour to read our paper, to abstain from visiting the lecture room. It is enough that our walls should be disgraced by the placards which for the first time (thanks to Mr. Fleming) now blaze upon their dishonoured masonry. The only chance left by which the town can wipe away this disgrace is for the inhabitants to resolve, as one man, that the lecturer shall have the lecture room to himself—that he may go away from Lancaster, enabled to say of the good old town that his lectures were unattended by a single creature. That is the way to treat infidel lecturers. We trust, for the honour of the town, that our humble but very earnest request will be thought worth attending to. If, on the contrary, the infidel lectures should be attended by any considerable number of listeners, Mr. Fleming must be held responsible for the consequences.'

It is clear that those who read this might break my head, with the impression that they were saving their town from 'dishonour.' Taught to regard me as a 'pestilence,' they might come to treat me as one. Yet the *Gazette* represents the Church of England party. The clergy of this Church are commonly gentlemen by birth, and are always understood to be so by education, and from them we are accustomed to receive courtesy of refutation higher than their Dissenting rivals show to us. Among Dissenters I except the Unitarians, whose religion includes courtesy. I was therefore surprised to find the *Gazette* descending to so much rudeness as this article manifests.

This was certainly a very curious reception to give a stranger. If there were not the *Guardian* in the same place to exalt the character of letters somewhat, the public would have an extraordinary notion of editorial affability in the good old town of Lancaster.

But I was far more surprised to find in another Lancaster newspaper, the *Guardian*, a letter from the Rev. Mr. Fleming, to the same purport, but after a different fashion. What will the English public say to the following communication to the editor of the *Lancaster Guardian*? Had I invited Mr. Fleming to meet me in London, the best Hall at my command, or over which my friends had influence, would have been placed at his disposal, and the most intelligent and courteous audience we could have invoked should have been summoned to greet him.

'THE REV. MR. FLEMING TO THE EDITOR OF THE "LANCASTER GUARDIAN."'

'My Dear Sir,—I see it is assumed in the hand-bill announcing the lectures to be delivered by Mr. Holyoake, next week, that I shall be present on each occasion, to reply to what is advanced. I have no such intention; and nothing that I have said or written in connection with the present discussion warrants any such expectation. Moreover, I have other views of Christianity than to risk its defence in opposition to what may be urged against it, in a hurried and off-hand speech at ten o'clock at night. And this Mr. Holyoake must or ought to have known. The announcement, therefore, that "each night an opportunity will be afforded to the Rev. Mr. Fleming to reply," is, as it stands, a mere bait to ensure an audience. But though I have no intention of replying to Mr. Holyoake in the way that he evidently wishes me to do, and though in consequence of other important engagements, I fear I shall not even have the opportunity of hearing him, I yet abide by all that I have written, and in due season will show that "I am prepared to reply to him, and vindicate the claims of Christianity against all he may advance against them."

'Sir, I cheerfully concede to Mr. Holyoake the right of holding what opinions he pleases. Against that I have nothing to say. The right of private judgment

to the fullest possible extent, is his, and every one's. Still, in the exercise of this right, I believe he has grievously and fatally erred. Many of the opinions he holds, on questions of the greatest vital importance, and which he is most assiduous in propagating, I regard as most dangerous. That your readers may have some idea of them, I submit to their consideration the following, extracted from his printed writings. "It seems to me that there is nothing in Christianity that will bear the test of discussion or the face of day:" "Nor am I a believer in the inspiration of the Bible. That which so often falls below the language of men, I cannot, without disrespect, suppose to be the language of God:" "Surely we must see that sin against God is impossible:" "I have seen the falsity of the Christian system; my mind is made up upon it:" "I will undertake to show, and I think satisfactorily, that the morality of Jesus Christ is not that which we can safely follow, or profitably hold up for example:" "I therefore repeat that the best character in the New Testament, if imitated, becomes an ill example:" "It seems to me that Nature and God are one—in other words, that the God whom we seek is the Nature which we know:" "If there be a God, it is that Nature which everywhere surrounds us:" "When man sinks, it is into the bosom of Nature:" "I am an Atheist, and the pulpits tell you that he who so avows himself must be, to use a phrase of their own, diabolical."

'These, Sir, are the opinions of Mr. Holyoake, which I submit to the public through your columns, because the question, I find, is asked, "What does he teach?" What encouragement ought to be given to the advocacy and promulgation of such opinions, I will not now say. An opportunity of doing so will soon be enjoyed by me. I leave it, therefore, with my fellow-townsmen themselves to judge of the course that ought to be pursued by them in this matter.

'Sir, I regard it as a very fortunate occurrence that the evening on which these sentiments are first openly taught and advocated among us, is the anniversary-meeting of our Auxiliary Bible Society. At the very moment the Scriptures are denounced and held up to public scorn as fictitious and false, in Market Street, the truthfulness, and divinity, and preciousness of the Bible, will be advocated by intelligent, and holy, and earnest Christian men, in St. Leonard Gate. It is surely not too much to say that I hope all who love and value God's own word will endeavour to give personal countenance to that anniversary, and thereby show that they prize the Scriptures, and are determined to sustain that noble institution in its soul-saving efforts, which is one of the grand bulwarks of our day against the advances of infidelity, lawlessness, and crime.

'Greenfield, May 16, 1851.

JAMES FLEMING.'

How could I help using his name on the placards? Pledged to go to Lancaster to defend my opinions against the Rev. Mr. Fleming, how could the inhabitants know that I was come to fulfil my promise unless I told them so? How could I do less than offer Mr. Fleming 'an opportunity to reply?' What would he have said had I refused him an opportunity? How could I help thinking that he would be present? He publicly announced that 'he would defend Christianity against all that I should advance against it;' how, therefore, was he to know satisfactorily what I advanced, or how reply to me, if he never meant to come near? Then what justification had he for representing me, not as one who entered Lancaster for the vindication of conscientious opinion, but as a trickster who sought baits to catch pence?

Moreover, as Mr. Fleming had accused me before the public of Lancaster of writing 'immoral' publications, why should he invite that public to a Bible

Society meeting on the night when I opened my defence against his charges? As a gentleman he ought rather to have encouraged that audience who listened to his charge to be present at my reply. Must we conclude that to be a Christian is incompatible with the generous amenities of life? Without knowing me, without having heard me, he tells the people of Lancaster that I should hold up the Bible to 'public scorn.' Scorn implies derision and contempt. Why should my simple and earnest dissent from the received interpretation of scripture be painted so offensively as is here done? Is Mr. Fleming incapable of distinguishing between respectful and derisive states of feeling? If he is not, he ought to cease to write about them; if he is, he ought to have observed more justice. But worse than this, he associates 'infidelity' with '*lawlessness and crime.*' Thus he not only excited against me the prejudices of the Christian, but he made me an object of suspicion to the civil magistrate.

When this aspect of things was known to others, they advised me not to go to Lancaster, deeming it rushing on destruction or injury—'into the lion's mouth,' etc. I thought so too, but that did not, under the circumstances, seem to me a sufficient reason for stopping away. So far as I could learn, no lectures of the kind I announced had ever been delivered in Lancaster; and, from these notes of preparation, I expected that forcible means would be taken to prevent these. This sort of letters has, in our experience, often been the prelude of violence, nor in this case were there wanting ominous signs. The Odd-Fellows, who let their Hall to Mr. Fleming—for it was in their Hall he made the attack—refused it to me to defend myself in. On me, a past officer of their Order, whose lectures they listen to on taking every degree—to me, to whom they had sworn, in the faith of the Order, to succour and help as a Brother—on me they closed the doors of their Hall when I was a stranger in their streets. This was one of the instances in which the brotherhood of faith destroys the brotherhood of man.

One place was obtained—the singing room of an inn. But, immediately it was announced as taken, two letters were sent to the proprietor to induce him to cancel his word and refuse me. Also, he was waited on, I believe, by a member of Mr. Fleming's congregation, who offered the proprietor the money he had let his room for if he would close the doors against me. And I began to see, in more ways than one, that though I was invited to Lancaster I was not welcome. At this point I sent instructions that no money should be spared, and that any demands should be met instantly; and I supplied money to meet any increase of charge that printer, or poster, or anybody might make or need in their reluctance or fear to supply me with the conveniences I required. I ordered the best place to be secured that could be had, so that my opponent might have no excuse that want of respectability in the place was the reason of his keeping away. All letters for me I ordered to be addressed to the post office, that my own retreat might remain a secret if need be. On this account my intention of living at the Royal Oak was changed, as I feared they might treat me rudely; and when I reached there I ordered a fly and drove to the outskirts of the town, and asked permission to stay with an obscure but honest family. It was not without apprehension as to the inconvenience that might result as to their future employment that they consented. The old gentleman I engaged as my servant, and I promised him the fullest protection if harm accrued to him. The door-keeper I paid at the rate of a box-keeper of a theatre. On the first night he was knocked down by two rude fellows, who refused to pay him the advertised admission. G. J. HOLYOAKE.

[To be continued.]

### Examination of the Press.

**RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AMERICA.**—The following are extracts from a letter which has been received by Mr. Owen from his eldest son, Robert Dale Owen. The letter is dated Indianapolis, Feb. 25, 1851:—I sit down, my dear father, at the close of the hardest winter's work I have ever gone through in my life, to give you some idea of its character and results. All our States, you may remember, have written constitutions, embodying not only the great general principles upon which the State governments are founded, but also briefly setting forth, in many details, what it is judged wise not to leave open to the annual chances of changeful legislation. These constitutions usually remain unchanged for a considerable term of years; a quarter to half a century. Ours has remained wholly unchanged for thirty-four years. When they are changed it is by a vote of the people in their primary assemblies. Last year a Convention was called for the purpose of changing our constitution, or organic law, as it is sometimes termed; and, as you know, I was elected a delegate. Our Session commenced on the 7th of October, and terminated on the 10th of February; and I have sent you, in the *Indiana State Sentinel*, the result. It will be submitted to the people next August; and there is little or no doubt that it will be adopted by a very large majority; for it seems to give the greatest satisfaction. We had eighteen standing Committees, to each of whom one branch, or class of subject, was entrusted, to be matured and reported. And the chairmen of all these Committees constituted a Committee of 'Arrangement and Revision.' I was appointed chairman of the two principal Committees. The Committee on the 'Rights and Privileges of the Inhabitants of the State,' and the Committee on 'Revision,' consisting of the eighteen chairmen. Of course I was compelled by my position—even if inclination had not urged me—to take a leading part in the deliberations and divisions of the Convention. Of course, I was the object of frequent attack; but I believe that even my opponents admitted—to use a common phrase amongst us—that they 'didn't make much of me.' I brought forward a proposition securing to women after marriage their own property, instead of suffering it to merge, as by the common law it does, in the husband. This, as you may suppose, was met by some of the sticklers for old custom, as a terrible innovation, calculated to uproot the foundations of society, destroy the harmony of the domestic circle, invade the sanctity of the marriage relation, and a great deal more of the same nonsense. I succeeded, nevertheless, in carrying through the provision in question, in somewhat varying forms, *three* several times by deliberate vote of ayes and noes. Each time it was reconsidered, and it was finally lost. This was chiefly effected by the influence of the Church. Several clergymen in this city attacked the proposal, and me by name as its author, openly in their sermons; and succeeded in scaring a few timid spirits who turned the scale against us. The question on final passage was ultimately lost by five votes only in a body of 150.—*Robert Owen's Journal.*

**PRIESTS NO REFORMERS.**—Goldsmith appeared to entertain no very exalted opinion of the priesthood, for in Letter 10 of the 'Citizen of the World' he says, 'In every country the bonzes, the brachmans, and the priests, deceive the people; all reformations begin from the laity; the priests point us out the way to heaven with their fingers, but stand still themselves, nor seem to travel towards the country in view.'

### The Catholic Polity.

A TRUE British Protestant, whose notions of 'Popery' are limited to what he hears from an Evangelical curate or has seen at the opening of a Jesuit church, looks on the whole system as an obsolete mummery; and no more believes that men of sense can seriously adopt it, than that they will be converted to the practice of eating their dinner with a Chinaman's chop-sticks instead of the knife and fork. He pictures to himself a number of celibate gentlemen, who glide through a sort of minuet by candle-light around the altar, and worship the creature instead of the Creator, and keep the Bible out of everybody's way, and make people easy about their sins: and he is positive that no one above a 'poor Irishman' can fail to see through such nonsense.

Few even of educated Englishmen have any suspicion of the depth and solidity of the Catholic dogma, its wide and various adaptation to wants ineffaceable from the human heart, its wonderful fusion of the supernatural into the natural life, its vast resources for a powerful hold upon the conscience. We doubt whether any single Reformed Church can present a theory of religion comparable with it in comprehensiveness, in logical coherence, in the well-guarded disposition of its parts. Into this interior view, however, the popular polemics neither give nor have the slightest insight: and hence it is a common error both to underrate the natural power of the Romish scheme, and to mistake the quarter in which it is most likely to be felt. It is not among the ignorant and vulgar, but among the intellectual and imaginative—not by appeals to the senses in worship, but by consistency and subtlety of thought—that in our days converts will be made to the ancient Church. We have receded far from the Reformation by length of time: the management of the controversy has degenerated: it has been debased by political passions, and turned upon the grossest external features of the case: and when a thoughtful man, accustomed to defer to historical authority, and competent to estimate moral theories as a whole, is led to penetrate

beneath the surface, he is unprepared for the sight of so much speculative grandeur, and, if he have been a *mere* Anglican or Lutheran, is perhaps astonished into the conclusion, that the elder system has the advantage in philosophy and antiquity alike. From this among other causes, we incline to think that the Roman Catholic reaction may proceed considerably further in this country ere it receives any effectual check. The academical training and the clerical teaching of the upper classes have not qualified them to resist it. At the other end of society there are large masses who cannot be considered inaccessible to any missionary influence, affectionately and perseveringly applied. Not all men, in a crowded community, are capable of the independence, the self-subsistence, without which Protestantism sinks into personal anarchy. The class of weak, dependent characters, that cannot stand alone in the struggle of life, are unprovided for in the modern system of the world. The co-operative theorist tries to take them up. But somehow or other he is usually a man with whom, by a strange fatality, co-operation is impossible: intent on uniting all men, yet himself not agreeing with any; with individuality so intense and exclusive, that it produces all the effect of intolerant self-will; and thus the very plans which by his hypothesis are inevitable, are by his temper made impracticable. He appeals, however, and successfully, to the uneasiness felt by the feeble in the strife and pressure of the world: he fills the imagination with visions of repose and sympathy: he awakens the craving for unity and incorporation in some vast and sustaining society. And whence is this desire, disappointed of its first promise, to obtain its satisfaction? Is it impossible that it may accept proposals from the most ancient, the most august, the most gigantic organisation which the world has ever seen?—that it may take refuge in a body which invests indigence with sanctity—which cares for its members one by one—which has a real past instead of a fancied future, and warms the mind with the colouring of rich traditions—which, in providing for

the poorest want of the moment, enrolls the disciple in a Commonwealth spread through all ages and both worlds? Whatever socialistic tendency may be diffused through the English mind is not unlikely, in spite of a promise diametrically opposite, to turn to the advantage of the Catholic cause. The middle classes of this country, and the foremost ranks of the artisans, have been so thoroughly cast in a Protestant mould, and so jealously vindicate their sturdy individuality, that no reaction from Rome will affect *them* with any feelings but of amazement and contempt. Still, in the peculiar combinations of the present period, materials enough exist in England for the successful operations of a well-equipped, devoted, and skilful priesthood; and if the prudence of Rome has failed her as to the *manner* of her recent advance, her true instinct has perhaps detected the right *moment*. It must be admitted that his Holiness has thoroughly puzzled the English people. It is not clear to them how they should comport themselves towards his pretensions. They have objections to arrogance at all times; and when an Italian Priest meddles with their national geography, disposes of their counties, draws lines around their cities, and, fixing an admiring eye on the unfurnished cathedrals of Westminster and Beverley, supplies bishops for their future adornment—they feel inclined at least to let him know that *they* are here, and that England is not an unoccupied colony to be parcelled out among his flock. But they read Cardinal Wiseman's Appeal, and become convinced that, if anything is amiss, it is their own fault; for that apparently nothing has been done beyond the fair scope of law. Then it is useless to be angry, unless they alter the law; yet to repent of what they did with a purpose of justice, and in a temper of generous trust—to recall their deliberate concession of free religious development—to resume again the detestable policy of theologic legislation—is a course which they would feel ashamed to contemplate. Moreover, in such a course, it is equally difficult to know how to begin and where to stop. To legislate about mere names and titles, apart from the functions they denote, would be a helpless expression of childish irritation: to prohibit the offices themselves

would be to drive a wounding law into the interior structure of the Roman Catholic church.

If Catholicism be a superstition, that is no reason for interfering with it by law..... Whether its solution of questions of divinity be wiser or more foolish than that of the Protestant Confessions, is a matter with which the state has no concern. It may go astray on all the topics of the Thirty-nine Articles—may blaspheme in its prayers to the 'Mother of God'—may be idolatrous in the mass and pagan in the ritual, without justifying the slightest legislative check. Were it heretical as Antichrist, and false as the scarlet abomination, its career should run free of the Attorney-General. Englishmen enjoy—as inseparable from freedom of conscience—unlimited right of error and delusion. There is (or recently was) an establishment near London for the adoration of the Vital Principle; where it is the most serious of crimes to eat beef, a deplorable infirmity to cut a cabbage, and the height of holiness to live on apples ripely dropping into the expectant aprons of devotees. The disciples of Mr. Holyoake undertake the propaganda of Atheism. The Book of Mormon succeeds among thousands in the North to all the honours of the Bible. And a nation which is wise enough to leave all these things unmolested by coercive check, cannot abandon its forbearance in dealing with the confessional and the eucharistic sacrifice. If the Latter-day Saints may organise their staff of 'Angels,' and send them, in the name of Joe Smith, to baptise converted potters and believing housemaids in the waters of every large river; the Catholics cannot, on any charge of superstition, be denied their order of Bishops, for the supervision of the priesthood and the governance of their faithful. After tolerating so much new nonsense, we have lost all plea for growing angry with the old.

But, in fairness to the Protestant feeling, it should never be forgotten that the Roman Catholic system presents a feature absent from every other variety of Nonconformity. It is not a RELIGION only, but a POLITY—and this in a very peculiar sense..... You might differ from John Knox about Synods, without prejudice to your agreement in all else. But with the Romish Church it is different.



It is not that her religion contains a Polity, but that her Polity contains the whole religion. The truths she publishes exist only as in its keeping, and rest only on its guarantee; and if you invalidate it, they would vanish, like the promissory notes of a corporation whose charter was proved false. . . . . Simple people imagine that theocratic claims are harmless because they refer only to spiritual matters. Cardinal Wiseman assures the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, that he does not covet their Abbey, or begrudge their revenues, or dream of meddling with their congregation. He only wants to be a city missionary, and carry light and consolation into noisome courts and alleys, where Protestant influence cannot penetrate. He and his episcopal brethren have no other function than to see that the 'poor Irish' say their prayers—that the priests are diligent in their calling—that the altars have clean cloths, and the broken crucifixes get repaired. They administer in a kingdom that is not of this world; and never can quit their quiet sphere to enter into the affairs of civil life. Human interests and institutions are no more in danger from them than from the angels in heaven. We believe this to be said in perfect good faith, from the Catholic point of view; and for the hour to be true even from the Protestant. But before we concede, upon this plea, the demand of every church to perfect Autonomy—before we turn away with the careless assurance that these clerical matters are no affair of ours, it might be well to know how and where the line is to be drawn between temporal and spiritual things. Even in the reformed churches this boundary has been a topic of serious dispute. . . . . But, on the Catholic map of this universe, no such line is found at all; or if it seems to be there, it is but as the shadow of a window-frame, throwing its bar across the sheet, and shitting as the sun of ecclesiastic glory rises or declines. What is temporal in England is spiritual in Spain; what belongs to the kingdoms of this world in the nineteenth century, belonged to the kingdom of heaven in the sixteenth. *De jure*, the divine commission extends to everything, and might absorb this planet into the Papal state: *de facto*, it includes what it can, and stops where it must. . . . . To re-

cede with passive resistance in every step, to advance with active pressure in every open direction, is the policy of a priesthood that never dies.

During the last thirty years there has been, till lately, a constant retreat of legislation from its interference with the private will; from the press, from commerce, from litigation, from religion, restrictions have been removed; and the notion has become current that the State has nothing to do but to protect 'body and goods.' So long as such an idea retains its influence, and government attempts no more than to stop theft and keep the peace, it can scarce come into collision with any priesthood, and no apprehension of any interference will exist: the two rivals are for the time on different walks, and will not meet. The vicar apostolic does not aspire to be constable, or the lord-lieutenant to perform extreme unction. But the time comes of inevitable reaction against our exaggerated trust in individual self-guidance: fever and pauperism in cities, sullen indigence in the country, excessive work in factories, and juvenile ignorance everywhere compel us, as a community, to enlarge our aims and embrace some moral ends. Reformatory discipline is attempted in the prison; industrial training in the Poor Law Unions; public grants are made for education; and in Ireland, first, common schools, next, lay colleges are created under sanction of Parliament. No sooner does this nobler statesmanship begin to take effect, than the politician is told that he is trespassing on the churchmen's ground. Who but the priest can undertake the 'cure of souls?' Who but he distinguish their medicine from their poison? Who else has a right to care about God's poor? Are the Catholic youth to read history without a spiritual guide at their elbow, to tell them whom to canonise and whom to hate?—and to learn geology without the art of squeezing the epochs within orthodox dimensions? And to study astronomy without warning from the contumacy of Galileo? No: vested interests of the holiest kind pre-occupy the territory of knowledge; no plough shall touch, no harvest insult, its special right of eternal barrenness. And so, amid a pageantry, and with a secrecy fitted to mystify a dead of darkness, the Irish Episcopate hold a Synod at

Thurles; resolve to quench the best light of promise that for many a generation has been lifted above the storm of faction; and surmising with sure instinct, that what brings the nation to port, must bring the priesthood to wreck, they repent of the prospect of repose, and steer the vessel right back into the tempest.

And so, in proportion as legislation rises above matters of police,.....and attempts beneficent prevention, instead of posthumous infliction; just therefore when it begins to interest the moral feeling of the nation, and attest the growth of higher sentiments, does the altar appear to bar the way, and the priest declares that all within the rail is his. At the moment and in the act of aspiring to a nobler life, the State is blocked out and spurned as most profane. So has it always been with that proud church: and so it must ever be. Yet, strange to say, all this may be without fault, without pride, in individuals. It involves no reproach to private believers or to official guides. They are entangled in a net whose threads have shot out fibres into their wills, and penetrated the very substance of their souls.....The arrogance of Rome is something impersonal: it is a function of her organism, a law of her ecclesiastic life. It utters itself alike from the lips of the meekest and the most insolent of her prelates, and whether acting through the energy of Hildebrand, the frivolity of Leo the Tenth, or the saintly virtues of Pius the Fifth, never permits you to forget the 'Vicar of Christ.' It is in the very atmosphere of her traditions. Like the wind which, in crossing the ocean, distils its surface, taking up the pure water and leaving the brine; these traditions, sweeping over the ages, absorb every glory and omit all the shame: and the temper which they nourish is the accumulated product of a history which forgets no victory and dwells on no defeat. But the social operation of this spirit is not alleviated by its absence, as a personal disposition, from the individual heart. It cannot be untrue to its tendency. A system pledged to solitary and universal empire; enjoyed to see nothing, hear nothing upon God's earth, except itself, and the subject given for

its sway; bound to blot out all countries from the map, and all ages from Christian history, which do not bear witness to its unity and majesty, can make terms with no rival, and endure no equal. Others are free, when only not oppressed: but this feels itself a slave, till it is lord of all.

What, then, is the political inference to be drawn from this theocratic character in the Roman Church? Have we been supplying premises for a no-popey conclusion? Not so; unless the canons of Exeter Hall logic are henceforth to be the rules of English statesmanship, and a fickle cowardice to take place of that noble courage with which, in many a danger, the English people have dared to be just. Ambition in a sect, and exclusiveness in a creed, are good reasons for not arming them with special power, and trusting them with political privilege: but no reason at all for withholding from them civil equality, or imposing coercive limits on the spontaneous development of their religious institutions. No one thinks of insisting on humility of mind as a condition of the franchise, or denying the alderman's gown except to the shoulders of modest innocence; and as little can we make the temper of a Church a qualifying ground of its civil freedom. With our eye, then, full upon the inevitable tendencies of the Romish system, with the conviction that it generates a state of mind at variance with the English standard of civil and religious liberty, with the certain knowledge, that the equal and tolerant treatment it receives it will never, in its place and day of power, be willing to reciprocate; we yet say to our fellow-countrymen—Be just, and fear not; put not your trust in coercive laws, dream not that divine truth can be bought with the coin of human injury: be resolved, if ever you have to defend your own rights from encroachment, to enter the field without reproach. The free mind and the large heart in yourselves and your children, will be a surer charm against the priest and the canon law, than preventive statutes or an outcry for the Queen's supremacy.—*From 'The Battle of the Churches'; Art. VII. of the Westminster Review, for January 1851.*

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

### THE MEDICAL SYMPTOMS OF CONTROVERSIALISTS.

*To the Editor of the Reasoner.*

SIR,—Judging from what appears in your journal, you deem it desirable to be able to reduce the phenomena so commonly manifested by disputants to some defined physical rule, whereby the liability to invective and imputation could be estimated on scientific principles. Examining the Life of Joseph Blanco White some time ago, I found the following letter, addressed by him to a Liverpool paper at a time when controversy raged in that port. What he communicates as having reduced to a science is as worthy to be ranked as a discovery in intellectual surgery as those of Jenner or Hahneman in other curative departments. I am sorry White did not live to found hospitals and publish a manual of the new Art. •

Sir,—I am an old practitioner of medicine, who have the misfortune of being established on so healthy a spot of the principality of Wales, that I hardly have anything to do in the way of my profession. The people among whom I live are so obstinate—I might say, rudely—well, that, for a time, I could not help taking their vivacious looks as a personal insult. But habit has reconciled me to this impudence of health, and I do no longer complain of their total disregard of my interests. I have, however, a little pittance of my own, and being naturally contentus parvo, i. e. not ambitious, my time is entirely devoted to the establishment and development of a medical system of my own. Having very, very few near me who want my advice, I have for some time been in the practice of making out medical cases for myself, entirely for the love of science; for I seldom trouble the patients with my opinion, and never, of course, either was offered, or accepted a fee. But, ‘How,’ you will ask, ‘do you proceed? Do you procure a view of the persons for whose welfare you are so disinterestedly concerned?’ No, my dear sir, not at all; for, besides that, I could not afford to travel at my own cost—I should fear to be very uncivilly sent about my business when I had fully stated the object of my errand.

Now, Mr. Editor, I beg your particular attention, for I am about to lay open the delicate, and, I might say, ethereal principle of my system. You know how many attempts have been made to discover the internal state of the microcosm, man: by the lines of the hand, cheiromancy; by the features, physiognomy; and lastly, by the bumps and dimensions of his head, phrenology. Nor have speculatists been wanting who wished to discover the state and peculiar structure of the mind, through the shape of individual handwriting. I have gone deeper into the mystery of man, and am, at length, in possession of a key which opens at once the moral and physical state of certain individuals to my observant eyes. The moral part of the discovery, however, I leave to the clerical profession, reserving to myself that which properly belongs to the science of medicine. My guides (to come at once to the discovery) are the literary compositions of the various patients who, in absolute ignorance of their internal diseases, betray them completely through their writings. This science have named Bibliopathology. At present, there is but one adept of this miraculous science, that is, your humble servant, myself; but I am ready to receive pupils, and if, by means of your valuable paper——

However, I will say no more, lest you should charge me for an advertisement. To return to my method. I procure as many of the publications of living authors as my scanty means and the kindness of my friends will allow me. I study these productions medically; and such is the efficacy of my scientific principle, that, if there is any morbid tendency in the author, I can instantly discover it. Oh! sir, how many a young poet and poetess have I cautioned—alas! in vain—against an approaching consumption! How many cases of inanition have I predicted! How many members of parliament (for I can form my diagnosis from their speeches) might secure themselves from the various dangers of epilepsy, water in the head, and the writhings of the choleric, if they would believe my prognostic of their causes! But the largest field for my science I have always found among the clergy. There is not, my good sir, an episcopal charge but discloses to me a most wretched state of the internal system. As in parliament most of the indications are spasmodic, those of the clergy are mostly biliary. There is much plethora among them, with its natural consequences of somnolency, constipation, &c., &c.

But of bile! The true *atra bilis*, which the ancients used to send to Anticyra, as we do to Cheltenham, I frequently find the most appalling symptoms.

One of these cases has lately occupied my attention, which, as the patient (patient, of course, without his being conscious of it) lives in or very near our town, I have resolved to state to you at full length, that you may be good enough to make inquiries, and compare actual realities with my scientific conjectures, which, as you will easily believe, are more than realities to myself.

You are well aware the theological controversy is raging in your town of Liverpool. A theological controversy! Oh! if medicine had generally been carried to the acme of perfection to which I have brought it, that name would be more formidable than the influenza three years ago. Well, then, I have attentively examined the internal state of various individuals, as it is deducible from their printed productions on this occasion. I will not give you all my observations, for fear of tiring you; but I must beg your particular attention to the case of the Rev. Mr. —, as clearly indicated in a letter addressed to the Rev. Mr. —. I never met with a more dangerous superabundance of bile—acid, corrosive—threatening, in my opinion, a spontaneous combustion of the patient. I should not be surprised, indeed, if one of these mornings there should be found in the bed of the reverend gentleman a handful of *caput mortuum*, some alkalies, perhaps—the rest of the individual having been converted, with a loud detonation, into what the Germans very appropriately call sour gas.

I must, however, inform you of another delicate part of my method, which I have particularly applied to the case of Mr. —. It is this: out of the ancient and modern satirists I have chosen some strikingly-depicted characters to guide me in such medical investigations. Now, when I find in a recently-published book or pamphlet that the author might have sat to the satirical painter for one or other of his remarkable pictures, I directly infer a morbid state in the living writer—else how could a man with a sound constitution be so extremely like an exaggerated drawing, perhaps a caricature? Let us apply this rule to Mr. M— [the particular clergyman in question.]

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The paper found in the street by Mr. Dyer has not sufficient interest for publication.

Was the letter of 'M. A. L.' intended for publication?

## HISTORY OF THE LAST TRIAL BY JURY FOR ATHEISM.

IN the short time which has elapsed since this work was announced, two editions have been sold. A third edition has been prepared and is now ready for delivery. The following summary of the contents of the work will show the nature and variety of the topics treated in it:—

Chap. I.—Before the Imprisonment.

Chap. II.—The Trial.

Chap. III.—After the Sentence.

Chap. IV.—After the Liberation.

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### A HEBREW PRAYER, DONE IN GAS.\*

CLERICAL gentlemen of every denomination, and all who believe that the labourer is worthy of his hire, may now conscientiously select those articles necessary to a respectable exterior from the cheap clothes mart of Nebucadnezzar and Son. The violent outcry against gentlefolks patronising those firms who are supposed to pay their workpeople starvation prices, is silenced, and Fashion may now replenish her wardrobe, for next to nothing, without the fear of being haunted by spectral artizans and their wives and little ones. The Hebrew character has outlived the obloquy to which it has so long and so unjustly been subjected; and it must in charity be supposed, that the paltry list of prices, Jewish firms are said to pay for the making up articles of attire, is purely fictitious.

Nebucadnezzar and Son have, by a stroke of ingenuity and considerable outlay, illumined the public mind with respect to the real nature of their sentiments towards the masses who live by the sweat of the brow. They have caused to be written in letters of fire (that is jets of gas) the words 'God bless the People' along the whole range of their extensive establishment in Oxford Street; and thus, nightly, the disaffected crowd may inform themselves that their paymasters are by no means so cruel as they are represented to be—at least they are willing that the people may be blessed spiritually if not by better prices.

Bigots may condemn the gas light benediction of the Hebrew firm as no better than a splendid mockery; the over-refined may deem it profane to mix up prayer with paletots and pantaloons; but whatever those who have not learned to live in charity with all men may say of the holy device emblazoned on the show-rooms of the enterprising Israelites, there is no doubt those disinterested capitalists will bear the vilest insinuation of their enemies with a 'patient shrug,' and that their virtues will continue to shine forth (as the Mormon prophet has it) 'in the most glorious and brilliant manner.'

It is not every tradesman who can boast the happy arrangements of our Jewish outfitters, who not only supply a genteel garment at a lower rate than any other firm in the trade, but in addition they perform the arduous duties of high-priests, and turn their shop into a house of prayer.

\* By Moses and Son, who have had the words 'God bless the People' put up in gas on the side of their shop in Oxford Street, London.

It is to be hoped that as the stricken Israelites were healed by the brazen serpents which Moses hung out in the wilderness, so our over-worked artisans may derive some comfort from the contemplation of the ingenious contrivance invented by the Moses who sojourns in these latter days in the wilderness of Oxford Street.

CHRISTOPHER.

GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.  
 June 8th [7½], Robert Owen, 'Address to the Strangers who visit the World's Fair.'  
 Hackney Literary and Scientific Institution, Mermaid Assembly Rooms.—June 11th [8], a lecture.  
 Hall of Science, City Road. — June 8th [7½], a lecture.  
 Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—June 6th [8], a Discussion. June 8th [7½], a lecture.  
 Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'  
 Free Inquirers' Society, British Coffee Rooms, Edgeware Road. — June 8th [7], a lecture.  
 Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (S), a Lecture or Discussion.  
 City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—June 9th [8½], discussion. Subject, 'Does an all-wise Providence govern the Universe?'

ADVERTISEMENTS.

To Visitors to the International Exhibition.  
**J. BRYANT** (late of the London and Glasgow Arms, 292, Buchanan Street, Glasgow) having taken 'THE CROWN' TAVERN & COMMERCIAL LODGINGS, 469, New Oxford St., so informs those of his Glasgow friends who intend visiting the Metropolis. Consideration will be paid both to comfort and economy. The Crown is centrally situated between the City and the Crystal Palace. Omnibuses to all parts of London continually pass the Door—Fare 4d. The Crown is within three minutes' walk of the British Museum.  
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 J. J. B. being thoroughly acquainted with London, intending visitors from any part of Scotland, Ireland, or the English provinces, may usefully communicate with him previous to leaving their homes.  
 It will be some guarantee to friends to observe that, before residing in Glasgow, J. J. Bryant was a long time a member of Branch A 1.

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	14 0

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The Devil's Pulpit, by ditto .....	4 6
The Lion, edited by Carlile & R. Taylor, 4 vols .....	15 0
The Vestiges of Creation, complete .....	2 6
Ernest Jones's Lectures on Canterbury v. Rome .....	1 0
Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love, by Gerald Massey .....	1 0
The Secret of Prevost, being revelations concerning the inner life of man, &c., by Justinus Kerner .....	1 6
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Eugene Sue's Wandering Jew, best edition .....	2 6
Ensor's Political Works, strongly bound, 4 vols .....	6 0
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The New Lanark Report, by Robert Owen .....	0 3
The Social Hymn Book .....	0 6
Carpenter's Political Text Book .....	1 0
13 Lectures by Robert Owen .....	1 0
Romanism the Religion of Terror, and Sects and Sectaries .....	0 2
Shortly will be published DEATH-BED REPENTANCE, its fallaciousness and absurdity; a new edition, rewritten by Robert Cooper, of Manchester .....	0 2
The Communist Chronicle, by Goodwyn Barmby .....	6
The Student, a sceptical play, by F. Bate .....	0 3
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## Our Open Page.

'PUBLICOLA,' in a recent letter, observes:—"There is a deplorable and general want of self-reliance in the people, which cannot be observed without apprehension. We seek for patronage in every thing—in religion, politics, trade, taste, literature, and charity. We beg to be "led by the nose as asses are." A single "noble" Reformer, with just a moderate portion of the other qualities for the post, would give the headless party of Reformers in the House of Commons the leader, and thereby the union and efficiency, now so desiderated, for it. But there must be station and position as well as talent. That sappy imitation of humanity, Lord Granby, is the recognised leader of the Protectionists. Disraeli is not Captain, only Adjutant. Our artists cannot make an Exhibition, nor our Hospitals get up a subscription list, nor our counties convene a meeting, nor our malcontents start an opposition, nor our amateurs play a play, nor our societies frame an organisation, nor our mechanics' institutes hold a tea-drinking, without patronage. We are slaves of names. We do not believe in principles; we believe in Lords. Those who cannot catch a Lord, put up with an M.P. Were the Saviour to come again, we should ask whether the Pharisees believed in him. But for Prince Albert, the world's grandest Exhibition would never have been realised. To benefit decayed authors, we must have a Ducal saloon for theatre, a Baronet for playwright, and the Royal Family for spectators. Our very Socialism requires to be nursed and dandled by a clergyman. The one thing in which we must co-operate is the game of "Follow my leader." And any may lead who are before us in the world. We are servile in our pride, and proud of our servility. Some nerve is needful to be hopeful of such a people."

Horace Walpole, in his recently-published correspondence with the Rev. W. Mason, says—"I have read divinity which taught me that no two persons agree, and metaphysics which nobody understands; and consequently I am little the wiser for either."

Mr. Holyoake acknowledges the receipt of a religious letter from the Rev. T. Collisson, Curate of New Radford, accompanied by 'Three Lectures on the Bible and Infidelity.'

Mr. Newsham asks what History gives particulars of a time when 'man living with his family acknowledged no other authority than his parents,' which he says he reads in the *Reasoner* of May 7th. We must refer him to the writer of the article.

Will 'W. E. B.' favour us with his address to his fellow subscribers, and an examination of Mr. Alfred Smee's 'Untrodden road to the proof of the Existence of God?'

Robert Owen is about lecturing again in London. At the John Street Institution, on June 10, 1851, he is to deliver an address to the strangers visiting the World's Fair,

Dr. Bateman has offered a prize of five guineas for the best Essay on the following subject:—"In what way is the Great Exhibition calculated to increase the Domestic Comforts and elevate the Character of the Working-classes; and what are the best means of making it available for these purposes?" The Essays are to be sent with as little delay as possible, to the Society of Arts, or to Dr. Bateman, East India-road, London.



# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## DEFENCE OF OPINION AGAINST THE CLERGY OF LANCASTER.

### II.

SPACE, that Supreme Arbiter of all articles, put an abrupt termination to my report last week at the point at which I recounted that the old gentleman who received money at the doors was thrown down. He was fortunately not much hurt, but was naturally enough intimidated, and I gave him a special sum on account of the assault, and guaranteed him the same sum every time he was knocked down; and, in case he was hurt, the best medical aid that could be commanded; and, in the event of his being injured in his humble connection by serving me, I undertook to remove his whole family to any town he selected, and sustain them till I provided them with new employment. Why I did this was, that I adhered to my fixed resolution of never imposing on any persons the responsibility which belongs to the course I chose to pursue myself. If need had been I would have spent in Lancaster all the proceeds of my three weeks' labour in Scotland rather than have been prevented offering the explanations the public there had a right to expect. If my expenses were greater than I could defray, I should apply to the readers of the *Reasoner* to make up the deficiency. To proceed—I desired my door-keeper to engage an *able* assistant to stand near him as a protection. The printer first applied to, to print my bills said, 'no,' and added 'it was a serious thing to meddle with Christianity in Lancaster.' The party who made this strange reply gave an ominous weight to it. On what ground fair play could be 'serious' I could not make out. No law existed which foreshadowed any punishment for the explanation of my views, without the concurrence of the Attorney-General to the indictment. This could not be unknown to the party in question; and as his printing a simple announcement could not be illegal, whatever my speaking might prove to be, there remained no very agreeable construction to put upon this answer. But another printer took a juster view of the matter, and my bills were issued. When the Sunday preceding the lectures arrived, from all the pulpits, I was informed, adjurations were addressed to the flocks not to attend my lectures. Yet there was one honourable exception to this, that of the Unitarian church, whose minister advised *his* hearers to go and judge for themselves. Not exactly knowing what to expect, I took the precaution to write to Sheffield, to one who was not only a good friend, but a *strong-armed* friend, whom I wished to see, both for company and service; for the only persons known to me were the two whom I had engaged as my servants, and who had neither influence nor help that they could render for my protection. But I was too late. Prior engagements prevented my friend coming. So I went down to the lecture room alone. The passage leading to it was blocked up by people to whom two men were distributing scurrilous religious tracts which had been imported from that sacred depository of calumny, the Religious Tract Society of London. One of the tracts being given away represented the Infidels

as men who 'lie in wait to deceive, who are diligently bent on ruining the present peace and the future prospects of mankind; who despise dominion, speak evil of dignities, and promise men liberty, while they themselves are the servants of corruption.' Saying further that 'it is awfully true, that this is a day of rebuke and blasphemy, in which bold bad men have arisen speaking perverse things, even denying the Lord who bought them; men who would cast down both the altar and the throne, would rob the Christian of his charter, and strip him of his hope, his help, his heaven.'

Another tract being given away was by the Rev. Hugh Stowell, describing the infidel as being as bad a character as can be well conceived; a drunkard, a blasphemer, and a cruel husband. These statements were put into the hands of the entire audience. If they believed but half of what was thus ungenerously told them I could not fail to find the meeting as amiable as a den of tigers. One lady was so far struck by the forcidity of the spirit of these tracts so distributed, asked if she should send for a policeman? I declined to allow one to be introduced about the meeting, as the presence of such persons often suggested violence or led to it. I assented that it might be well to have one available in case of need. The sequel, however, showed that neither the press nor the pulpits were able to put down the lectures, for, on entering the room, I found a good audience, and a slight cheer on entering showed me that I might even calculate on good feeling. I was told that the audience comprised some of the best families in the town. I first passed in review the article in the *Gazette* and the letter in the *Guardian*, then the tracts at the door, marking distinctly the estimate I was obliged to form of my reverend opponent. Then I proceeded to state the case between atheism and theism, which was the subject for the evening. Not the slightest interruption occurred from beginning to end. I was myself sole occupant of the orchestra, and I then left the meeting open for any reverend gentleman present to call in question my statements, so far as he thought me wrong.

The Rev. Mr. Hereford, Unitarian minister, was the first who rose. He said 'he thanked Mr. Holyoake for having laid his opinions before them, and for the manner in which he had done it. The language Mr. Holyoake had employed throughout could not possibly give offence to any one.' The rev. gentleman then, with great courtesy and in very accurate language—in the words of one thoroughly self-possessed and master of the subject—proceeded to bear his testimony to the independence of morality and religion, and the moral innocency of speculative opinions. He ended by asking me whether I would explain what amount of evidence would satisfy me as to the existence of God. I answered, as fully as I could impromptu, to such a question, 'any coherent scheme of probabilities, moral, physical, or testimonial.' The rev. gentleman said that he put questions with a view to learn what were the grounds on which I held my opinions, and he asked me a variety of questions, which I cannot now recall with accuracy. Most of them were brief and pertinent, and the necessity of answering instantly left me no time to record them.

Thomas Johnson, Esq., solicitor and clerk to the magistrates, then rose, and put a series of questions, well conceived and well expressed, a few of which I have preserved. He attended, he said, in order to hear the new order of arguments by which they might be met in time to come by persons who adopted views similar to my own. One question he put thus:

'Sir, you have admitted the existence of conscience; what is conscience? does it imply responsibility, and to whom?'

I replied, 'conscience is a man's sense of duty, and it implies responsibility to himself, and to his fellows.' Another interrogatory was this:

'The Scriptures exist, how do you account for them?'

I answered, 'how did I account for the Scriptures? Why I supposed them to have been written, and they appeared to me to have been written by honest, conscientious men.' Mr. Johnson replied:

'As I admitted that the Scriptures were written by honest men, how did I account for the records of miracles which they contained? If such things never happened, how came *honest* men to record them?'

To this I replied, that 'I was not aware that honesty implied infallibility. Were sincere men *never* mistaken? Did every honest witness in a court of law always prove himself incapable of error? Catholic miracles—the winking virgin of Rimini—had thousands of attestators whose honesty could not be questioned, and whose word could not be believed.'

Many other questions were put, and afterwards Mr. Read, a tradesman, as I was told, rose and said:

'I had sought to prove the innocency of speculative opinion; but were we morally innocent in endeavouring to counteract others' faith, if we have nothing better to put in its place?' He then gave the case of a repentant Socialist, who had become degraded by Socialism, and died deplorably. I had to tell this gentleman, that if the death-bed was a test of true faith, the Protestant must give way to the Catholic religion, and Mahomedanism and Buddhism were truer than Christianity. If he would point out to me what principles of Socialism were calculated to demoralise a man, I would myself give them up. I explained to him what the principles of Socialism were, and he made no answer. Also I observed that he was mistaken respecting me; I *had* better views to put in the place of those proposed to be removed.

Mr. Thompson, a mason, then rose, and, with that painful and oppressive humility manifested by anxious and sincere Christians, asked whether he was not in the right to plead for religion he being a sincere Christian? I assured him that he was perfectly right in doing as he did, so long as he thought as he appeared to think.

It was past eleven before we concluded. While we were thus occupied, the meeting of the Bible Society was proceeding in the Music Hall. Of the various remarks made there about infidel writers and the spread of their opinions nothing was new, except the following episode, which I quote from the *Lancaster Gazette* of May 24:—

The Rev. C. Campbell said—'He had another reason [he had assigned a previous one] for attending their meeting. He felt that that night Lancaster was profaned; and he dared not shrink from expressing from that platform the indignation the subject excited. He had no doubt the originator [the Rev. J. Fleming] now present on the platform, had seen his error, humbled himself before God, and regretted that he should have been the cause of that profanation. He hoped that evening that in Lancaster infidelity would be foiled alike with Popery in its attempts to tear the sun of righteousness from its meridian, or, what was the same thing, to cover with thick darkness the glory of the living God. He really did hope the originator, who no doubt had erred from the best of motives, was alive to the mischief he was likely to occasion, and that the evil which his indiscretion had inadvertently occasioned would by the blessing of God be averted.' This exquisite piece of impertinence was received with applause.

The Rev. J. Fleming himself said—'The rev. deputation had told them that the meetings of the society were this year better attended than ever, and rightly attributed it to the Papal aggression. The same cause, he believed, was acting on their meeting that night. Aye, and he thought they were also indebted somewhat to the great man in Market-street. He was glad to see the apprehended evil working thus to the increase of their meeting. He was glad to see Mr. Campbell there that night. His rev. friend (if he would permit him to call him so) was himself an illustration of the good effect upon their attendance, for he was one who came to their meeting entirely on account of the matter he was referring to. That he (Mr. Fleming) was the unwitting cause of the man being in the town he admitted. Some person must take the bull by the horns, and in the discharge of that duty he had made up his mind to endure a little goring. He was prepared for it; but he had the satisfaction of knowing that the lectures he had delivered had been attended with good effect, for he had since conversed with persons formerly of infidel tendencies who were now convinced of their folly. His friend, Mr. Campbell, was not acquainted with all the complicated circumstances that had been at work to produce the result. What he (Mr. Fleming) said publicly was made the pretext; and as to the responsibility, it might as well be said that Christ by his coming was responsible for all the persecutions his devoted followers endured. He had made up his mind to all this. They were not to be cast down by these little things. God's word must prevail. All the Popery and all the infidelity in the world would be but as chaff in the balance when compared with the effects to be produced by the diffusion of the Scriptures.'

A strange way of 'taking the bull by the horns' surely, to avoid Market Street where he was to be met, and advise all his followers to keep out of the way.

Next day the public opinion in the town ran much against Mr. Fleming. It is due to the people of Lancaster to say, that they had healthier notions of fair play than their pastors. The influence of their comments on the proceedings of the night at the two meetings was not lost on my opponent, for, on the second night, notwithstanding his own advice to others to keep away, he came himself; and when I entered the meeting, I found a large audience present, including several ladies. That night I was received with as much cordiality as though I had stepped on a London platform.

I began by stating that I had again found at the doors two tract distributors. I addressed the men engaged in that unfriendly work, for the tracts of that night were as abusive of infidels as on the preceding evening—representing them as drunkards, cruel husbands, blasphemers, and much else that is evil. Looking the older man closely in the face, I said—

Why are you giving those tracts away? The only answer I received was:

He was ordered to do so.

Where do you come from? I inquired.

He didn't know.

You an intelligent man, fifty years of age, and pretend that you don't know where you come from?

The Tract Society, he replied.

What Tract Society? The Tract Society who issue the tracts in your hands is in London. Have you been sent down from London?

He didn't know.

Finding this pious tract distributor suffering from some confusion in his organ

of veracity, I turned to his brother on the other side the passage, and I asked him who sent him there ?

He did not know exactly.

Well, tell me as exactly as you can, I said.

The Tract Society, he replied.

Who are the Tract Society ? You know who sent you here ?

He didn't know that exactly.

You must know the names of some of them. Name those you remember best.

Well, the *Rev. Mr. Fleming* was one.

When I came to this part the meeting grew much excited, and called out 'shame, shame,' all around Mr. Fleming. I told that meeting, that as they were anxious to know what my objections to Christianity were, that there was one objection which I had to it which amounted to a prejudice, which was that it taught bad manners. Not even in the strife of the House of Commons, nor in the conflicts of civil parties, could any man indulge, without forfeiting his character as a gentleman, in such language as was employed with applause in Christian controversy, and justified by Scriptural quotations.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

[To be continued.]

#### THE MAHOMETAN PARADISE.

CHRISTIAN writers frequently bring, as a damning and conclusive charge, sufficient of itself to consign Mahometanism to the contempt of refined and civilised nations, that the description in the Koran of the Paradise prepared for faithful believers presents a series of enjoyments of the most sensual and material nature. Now the descriptions of Hell in the New Testament are all essentially material, and the Catholic Church gives her sanction to the most horrible pictorial representations of infernal torments according to Scripture, for the terror and edification of children and persons unable to read. But most Protestants would complain bitterly of being calumniated if they were accused of approving or tolerating such coarse intimidation. Protestant theologians shrink from a bold and explicit exposure of their own doctrines, and seek to shroud them in vague, general, and mysterious terms, or obscure metaphorical language. They cannot deny a belief in the hell-punishments mentioned by Jesus, who describes the rich glutton opening his eyes amidst the flames of hell, and begging in vain for a drop of water to cool his tongue ; who tells his disciples of the bottomless pit, the worm that dieth not, the tormenting devils, and the lake burning with fire and brimstone. Protestants cannot get rid of these definite and material images, but they avoid dwelling on the subject, and many of them teach that the Bible accounts of Hell are figurative, and signify the torments of conscience, and the absence from God, and the spirits of the just made perfect.

But, indeed, if we examine the accounts of Heaven contained in the Christian Scriptures, we shall find them also to be essentially material, and, unless figuratively explained away, not at all superior in dignity, speciousness, or grandeur to any of the ancient mythological or poetical descriptions. The Scriptural heaven, with its vulgar machinery of lightning, thrones, incense, and flying angels, is a fit counterpart to the Scriptural hell, with its brimstone lakes, devils, and gnashing of teeth ; and both equally require the unlimited acquiescence of modern Protestant believers in an uninquiring and indefinite supposition of metaphor and mystery : if taken in a literal sense they would be too absurd for any man of education, however

pious. In a literal sense, what could the modern Christian think of the being seated on a throne in Heaven, who is 'to look upon like unto a jasper and a sardine stone,' and who is worshipped 'day and night' by twenty-four elders, and four beasts of diverse and grotesque appearance, and 'full of eyes before and behind' (Revelations, c. iv., v. 6). The modern Christian looks with most supreme contempt and pity on the Hindoo, whose God is symbolically represented with three heads and eight arms, and overlooks the fact that the Bible declares God to be worshipped in Heaven under the form of a lamb, 'as it had been slain,' with seven horns and seven eyes, and that on one occasion their God descended to the earth in the bodily shape of a dove! Without a liberal use of mystery and metaphor, the modern Protestant theologian could not make a plausible show of reply to the doubts and difficulties of his pupils.

Now, on the part of Mahometanism, it must be said that a considerable sect, the Sufis, consisting of the most learned and devout men of that religion, explain all the sensual pleasures of their promised Paradise in a figurative sense, as signifying angelic and spiritual enjoyments. They deal with the Houris just as Protestants deal with the brimstone lakes, the celestial beasts, and the 'back parts' of Jehovah. And surely no Christian can cavil at such an explanatory process, no Christian can find fault with the use of such imagery to describe the bliss of Heaven, when he himself believes that Solomon was inspired by God to delineate the love of Christ for his Church, and other divine mysteries, under the gross and sensual raptures of a lascivious epithalamium. The Sufis also regard as religious allegories the amorous and convivial lyrics of the celebrated Persian poet, Hafiz, who was a member of their sect, and whom they venerate almost as an inspired writer. For every word and phrase in his songs they discover an appropriate religious interpretation, just as pious Christian commentators find a mystical significance in the warmest passages of the Song of Solomon.

When the Mahometans require a Reformation they will have it. They must pass through this stage, as European Christian nations are now passing. Increased knowledge and better taste will cause the most revolting and immoral tenets of the Koran to be modified, softened down, and explained away, in the same way that Protestants have treated various doctrines and conclusions that may be legitimately drawn from a *literal interpretation* of the Bible.

UNDECIMUS.

#### THE OBSCURE HISTORY OF A CHURCH.

In connection with the arrangements for the Census recently taken, blank forms were issued to the churchwardens for the purpose of obtaining certain information concerning their respective churches. The return for a church near Hereford is said to have been filled up as follows:—To the question, 'How or by whom erected?' the answer was, 'I do not know.' 'When consecrated?' 'God knows.' 'Under what circumstance the license granted?' 'Nobody knows.' A column was left in the schedule for 'remarks,' and the communicative warden took advantage of the opportunity to enlighten the Home Secretary with the following expression of his opinion:—'There is in this parish about £500 per annum paid in all ways from the occupiers of land to this church, and I have known the whole of the duty done for £35 per annum. We have only one service on a Sunday, and the parish very seldom visited by a clergyman. We have to thank the Dissenters for what little education the poor receive. In my opinion we want a radical reform in the church.' We would beg to suggest that the reform wanted is in the application of the funds thus supplied, which should be given for the support of a good secular school for the poor children of the parish.

A.

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## ON THE CIRCULATION OF FREETHINKING WORKS.

*To the Editor of the Reasoner.*

SIR,—I have read with much pleasure the suggestions contained in your letter to Mr. Trevelyan, printed in a recent number of the *Reasoner*, concerning the establishment of a publishing house in London, with an extensive agency in the provinces; and it appears to me highly desirable that they should be carried out as soon as practicable.

From the observations I have been enabled to make, I believe that no publication devoted to the advocacy of Freethought will be able to defray its expenses by the mere produce of its sale, while the present system continues. The circulation of such, from a variety of causes, is impeded even among the class whose opinions it expresses.

Beyond the circle of Freethinkers, a periodical of such description can hope for no support worth any consideration. The opponents of free-inquiry stigmatise its organs as advocating immorality, and would think their doom sealed were they to suffer a sixpence of their money to support them. Some do this through bigotry, and others through ignorance. But they are both equally prejudicial. It is true, exceptions relieve this dreary void; but they are few and far between.

A correspondent of yours, a short time since, remarked that the rich freethinkers in Liverpool debar themselves from supporting such publications as the *Reasoner*, although they concur in its principles, from the fear of braving the opinion of the world. This disease of fear prevails in a very extensive degree, not only in Liverpool, but all England. I say disease, for this fear is carried too far. I consider that the real cause of this complaint is often indifference. Certainly they might support their friends without posting hand-bills concerning their creed.

The destruction of this prejudice of the 'world' would be a great object attained. Many freethinkers view with comparative indifference the increasing freedom of language employed by the Press in treating of holy things; but that levity must in time remove this great obstacle. Let us obtain only toleration, and conviction to the tolerators will soon follow.

There are many whose fortunes are under the control of others, a withdrawal of whose patronage would be the sure effect of an expression of scepticism. These are placed in a worse condition than their opulent brothers, who would not achieve their utter ruin by open unbelief.

But even among freethinkers willing to support them, the circulation of their journals is hindered. The newsvendors in large towns display Christian periodicals in their windows and at the doors, but deny to the *Reasoner* and its brethren a similar exhibition. Some go further, and refuse to supply it—though I believe these are few. Many agents, who would otherwise deal impartially, are prevented from so doing by the menaces of rev. gentlemen, whose countenances, as they know by bitter experience, do not always beam with that benignity which they contrive to display when they sit for their portraits. Therefore, many sceptics are ignorant of the existence of their journals, and consequently, if they would, they cannot support them.

In villages the case is worse. The newsvendor, for there is seldom but one,

is generally one of the softer sex, and very often a teacher in a Sunday school, or at least connected with one. The numerous periodicals which figure in the list in the 'Directory' with the prefix 'Christian' or 'Gospel,' that worthy vendors by dozens; but a freethinking publication is prohibited. Indeed, an application for a copy would give rise to an exhortation, duly seasoned with *diablerie*; and then the minister, who is the *cazique* of the place, would take up the matter: and thus the freethinker, if he wishes to avoid ruin, must stifle his opinions and play the hypocrite. Obtaining the periodical there is quite impossible.

There are few who abuse the Jesuitical policy of penetrating into the bosom of families, who know how far the same thing is done by other priests, both established and dissenting. In relation to freethought their influence is most baneful; the unhappy sceptic has often to choose between the Gospel and being discarded by his priest-ridden relatives.

The only instruments by which to remove these obstructions appear to be a general agency, and a partly-forced circulation by means of distribution. The former will be of service to professed freethinkers, and the latter must, in a greater or less degree, cause conviction, or at least toleration. At present, however, it is evident that a publication of this class, solely dependent on its own resources, must incur a loss.

H. I. U.

[We readily insert this letter. In its observations we fully concur, as respects the groundless fear of many of our friends; but we have reason to think better of the Newsvendors than our correspondent.—Ed.]

#### MR. HOLYOAKE'S LECTURE IN GALASHIELS.

THE question of Education is becoming every day of greater importance. All are agreed as to the necessity of some measure for securing its blessings to the mass of the population. But while all are agreed as to its necessity, serious differences exist as to the *mode* in which this blessing is to be supplied. We have occupied a portion of our columns with a condensed report of a speech upon this subject, by Mr. Holyoake, of London, which was delivered to a numerous, if not select, audience of our townsmen. With regard to the speech in general, we confess we listened with considerable pleasure to the dispassionate way in which the gentleman handled his subject. There was none of that violent, inflammatory declamation with which some itinerant orators are in the habit of regaling the public ear—no supplementary seasoning of the dish to tickle a dull or deadened appetite, but plain and rational statements, put forth in a clear manner and temperate tone. We were not a little pleased to find the high standard at which Mr. Holyoake wishes the national education to be placed. It is not too much Education we have to fear, but too little. The half-educated man, who remains contented with his modicum of learning, is, in general, a presumptuous, self-conceited pedant. Vain of the little smattering attained, he stands upon a slightly elevated platform, which, while it does not enable him to commune with loftier spirits, is sufficient to make him despise those above whom he has risen, but lying far, far indeed, below those high overshadowing terraces of Parnassus, which, could he attain them, would only serve to show him how many more elevations lay beyond these, and *how little* he knew of what may be known. We rejoice, therefore, to observe that the curriculum required by the advocates of Secular Education aims at something higher than the ordinary branches, which are, too often, as much as the means of the parents can afford. But here our admiration of the scheme must stop.



There are other features in the case to which we cannot so readily grant our assent; and the first will readily strike every Scotsman who has had the inestimable privilege of drinking in the sublime and simple truths of the New Testament with the earliest lessons of childhood—it is the purposed and total exclusion of the Word of God from the school. If ‘Combe’s Constitution’ be a work fitted by its simplicity of style, and the grandeur of the truths it contains, to form a school-book (as we are informed it is) for the young; surely we may be allowed to bring forward that humble book, the New Testament, on the same ground. Are its lessons of morality less hard to be understood or practised? Are its unadorned simplicity and pathos less calculated to arrest the young mind and enchain the attention? Is there any precept contained in its pages which any one of these advocates of morality would venture to condemn? In fine, viewing it merely as a *school-book*, we would ask, where is there to be found in all the wide literature, which claims no higher birth-place than the earth we tread, a book better fitted, by its simplicity of style, its earnestness of tone, and sound practical wisdom, for instructing the young, and training them in the path which will most conduce to their happiness as men, and members of society? The Bible has other and higher claims to recommend it as the best book to be placed in the hands of the young—even the recommendation that it is *the truth* of God; but we ask on merely moral grounds, what can the advocates of unsectarian Education see in the Word of Life that they must banish it from the eyes of the young as a dangerous thing? Is it not a thing of itself savouring of sectarianism, to exclude a book which the unanimous voice of every good and pious man, in times past, and in the present day, demands (in Scotland at least) to be taught as the very foundation of all other instruction? The party who are opposed to this are a mere fraction, as every one knows; and, thank God, the majority have not arrived at that pitch of refinement as to count the Scriptures of Truth unfit food for the minds of their children. One word as to the objection brought forward by Mr. Holyoake and his coadjutors. ‘Familiarity,’ they say, ‘breeds contempt.’ ‘The name of God, by being made a task word, becomes disagreeable to the minds of the young.’ Such reasoning, in application to some subjects, bears a show of plausibility upon it; but a moment’s reflection will show the daring assumption that is here made. Where amongst the many thousands of our population that rejoice at this day in the light of the truth, could one be found who is not free to acknowledge to that his purest, holiest, and most ardent feelings of devotion were enkindled with that name which, taught in infancy to respect, with a confident, yet holy and awful reverence, is yet the name most sacred and venerated in his heart? The name of the Almighty author of our bodies, and the Father of our spirits—with reverence be it spoken—cannot become too familiar. It may be drawn in with the milk of infancy, and it may be taught at home and a-field, and why not also in the school with all propriety and decorum? And where else, but at school, are those benighted creatures to learn the truth, who are deprived by death of a parent’s care, or are as effectually kept in ignorance of all that is sacred by their ignorance or incapacity. The name of Him who sent his Son to save us, we repeat, cannot be too early graven on the hearts of the young. As well talk of the familiarity of the light of the sun ‘breeding contempt,’ or the common air which is necessary to support animal life, becoming despised on account of our familiar acquaintance with it! This much we would demand, that the Bible be one of the books read in schools, so that those (and their name is legion) who wish their children to be there instructed in the divine word may not be disappointed for

the sake of the few who really care not whether the Bible be read at all, either at school or elsewhere. It is only fair play that the *opportunity* may be placed in their way; and as for that same insignificant section of objectors, we see no reason they have to complain if the Bible is taught in the school where their children are. Let them send word that they do not wish their children to join the Bible class, for fear of contamination! in the same way as they would signify their desire that they should not learn Latin or any other branch, and we undertake to say the case, though rare, will receive the favourable consideration of the schoolmaster—he will certainly not *force* his scholars to learn anything, however desirable, against the wishes of the parents.

We thus express our conviction that the Bible, as a *historical* and a *moral* book, should be placed in the reach of *all*, and as a *religious* book it ought to be placed within the reach of that numerous body of Scottish people who demand it to be taught their children. It will be understood that we speak of reading the Bible without note or comment, except in so far as may be necessary for the elucidation of the subject. Any attempt at drawing sectarian deductions, or party doctrines from the pure word, we would reject and condemn; and conscious we are, that the great bulk (shall we not say, the entire parochial body of our schoolmasters; and we trust of other sects?) are far removed, indeed, from any such paltry and injudicious attempts to propagate a peculiar creed. The school may be, and we trust often is, the place where the good seed of the world is stored up in the heart, but we never heard of any one who had formed his religious creed from his teacher. That is the work of a maturer judgment and riper years. The attendance at our parochial schools, where the Bible is taught—composed often of every sect and denomination—goes far to prove the little danger which our population apprehend on this ground.—*Border Advertiser*, May 23, 1851.

[The lecture referred to was quoted in the *Leader* of May 31. The subject being Educational, is not relevant here—but the comments of the editor above given relate to topics we professedly debate in these columns. We must tell the editor of the *Border Advertiser* that he is not acquainted with the objections we could bring against the Bible, but we will not embarrass the great question of public Instruction by arguing the matter in connection with such a subject. We stand purely on the ground of conscience, and we ought not to be called upon to justify that conscience any more than any religious body that differs from the Church of England. It is enough that we do in our conscience object to the use of the Bible in the instruction of our children, and we claim that our conscience shall be respected (in this case) without discussion or imputation.—Ed.]

#### METHODIST REACTION.

THE *Wesleyan Times* gives the following statistics respecting the decline of Methodism:—The decrease in Halifax and Bradford is 3,514; Sheffield, 4,846; Manchester, 1,829; Liverpool, 1,098; Northampton, 631; Birmingham, 2,500; London, 4,848; Macclesfield, 440; Norwich, 4,096; York, 1,617; Leeds, 5,694; Newcastle, 3,360. Total decrease, 34,723.

These returns are from twelve districts, and show a falling off of Wesleyan disciples of nearly 35,000. The aforesaid paper remarks:—'When the returns from the remaining twenty districts come to hand, we suspect they will show a net decrease of about 50,000!' What can have induced such a large retrogression

amongst a class of such nose-led religionists? Internal dissension has done much, but reason also may have been at work, and convinced many of them that the experience-telling class-meeting is but another name for the confessional; and therefore they fly from the precincts of the Wesleyan denomination. I have cause to believe that our labours have not been without effect in reclaiming many from the narrow path of sectarianism to the broad field of principle. It is precisely in those towns where our labours have been most active that the greatest falling off is observable. If other sects were to publish how many of their sheep have left the fold, we should find cause of encouragement. J.

### SURGICAL OPERATIONS.

THESE operations have often won in a day for the operator more than years of unobtrusive labour could have gained. Mr. Skey, in the last Hunterian oration, dwells upon this subject, contending, if we are rightly informed, that the knife should be the very last resort of the honest and intelligent surgeon. He limits the use of the knife 'operations of expediency'—operations, that is to say, 'which are undertaken for the purpose of curing deformity, by the removal or division of sound parts, or of painless diseases, which do not exceed inconvenience.

### Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one Friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—and so on according to ability and earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

To the previous acknowledgments for Vol. X. we have to add 278s. from J. W., making a total of 1950s., which concludes the list for Vol. X. Next week we shall give the subscriptions towards the new volume.

### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square. June 15th [7½], Ernest Jones, 'Labour, Capital, Wages.'

Hall of Science, City Road.—June 15th [7½], Thomas Shorter, 'Approaching Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo.'

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—June 13th [8], a Discussion. 15th, [7½], a lecture.

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—June 15th [8], P. W. Perfit, 'Early Reformers in Italy.'

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

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Owen and Bachelor's Discussion on the Ex-

## Our Open Page.

THE select committee appointed on Ecclesiastical Courts have just issued their report, from which the following are extracts :—The Registrar of the Consistorial Court of Bristol resides in Lincolnshire, and receives a fixed payment from the deputy-registrar, in lieu of any part of the fees, of £200 per annum; last year this was reduced to £160. The joint deputy-registrars are solicitors and proctors, and exercise the exclusive right of transacting all the common-form business in the office. They estimate the average net emoluments of their joint office at £444. The judge's average annual receipts for the last three years were £126. Their business, as solicitors and deputy-registrars, is conducted altogether; and they make no distinction in their table of charges for common-form business, to parties in the court, between what is due to them as officers of the court, and their professional charges as proctors. The duties of the registrar of the Consistorial Court of Bath and Wells are performed by a deputy, the principal registrar being one of the metropolitan police magistrates, and receiving a net annual payment out of the fees of £400. The deputy's net receipts in 1847 were £810; in 1848 and 1849 they averaged £471. The greater amount in 1847 arose from additional fees in that year, consequent upon an inhibition of the Archdeacon's Court. The fees of the judge, who is stated to have sat in court once or twice, produce him an average net income of £166, besides £30 a year paid to his deputy, who acts as judge of the court, and is the father of the deputy-registrar. The deputy-registrar is also registrar or deputy-registrar of twenty-four peculiar courts; in respect of business in them the same charges are made as in the consistorial court. In the Decanal Court the principal registrar is a lady, who, the deputy believes, was appointed to the office when she was five years old. In the Archdeacon's Court the principal registrar, who receives £100 a year, and does none of the registrar's work, is a clergyman residing in another diocese, and is alleged not to be qualified to act as registrar.

Copies of the *Reasoner* were forwarded to Dr. Kerns, of Sheffield—one with the leading article entitled 'The Sheffield Lectures and Dr. Kerns,' and the other with the reply to the letter of Dr. Kerns. The Rev. Doctor has been at length aroused to do something in the shape of an 'Address to the Freethinkers of Sheffield,' &c. The following appeared in the *Sheffield Free Press* of Saturday, May 17:—'Dr. Kerns has favoured us with a long letter, addressed to "The Freethinkers of Sheffield and Mr. George Jacob Holyoake," which we must decline inserting on several grounds. The first objection we have is Dr. Kerns' own admission, that he took *no notice* of Mr. Holyoake's letter in the *Free Press*, and it was only on that letter, with some further remarks, being reprinted in the *Reasoner*, that the reverend gentleman felt disposed to reply to them. Such being the case, we would suggest that Dr. Kerns furnish his reply to the *Reasoner*, for which purpose we will return his MS. The second reason why we decline to publish the letter is on account of its *great length*. Besides this, we think a newspaper is scarcely the proper medium for a controversy of this nature. If we inserted the remarks of Dr. Kerns on Mr. Holyoake, we must in justice open our columns to the latter party for a reply. We are informed that Mr. Holyoake has *greatly* injured the cause of Christianity in this town already; and a controversy (after the great want of moral courage manifested by the ministers of religion in this town, in declining to meet that gentleman when he was in Sheffield), would, we believe, still further extend the injurious principles Mr. Holyoake advocates. In fact, the freethinkers boast that no minister or individual representing any religious body *dare* meet Mr. Holyoake; and to attack him now in the columns of our paper, in place of meeting him when in Sheffield, would only tend to strengthen that opinion.'

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## DEFENCE OF OPINION AGAINST THE CLERGY OF LANCASTER.

(CONCLUDED.)

WHEN my lecture was over on the *moral* objections to Christianity, Mr. Fleming and the Rev. Mr. Hereford both rose; but Mr. Hereford gave way to Mr. Fleming. Mr. Fleming declined controversy, and professed that all he should do would be to ask me questions as to my opinions; and this he did in a tone so opposite from that of every other gentleman who had spoken, that the meeting was as sensible as I was of the difference. Questions conceived so as to entrap were put in the spirit of one seeking a triumph rather than the truth. The aversion which by this time I had conceived towards this gentleman was so great, that it cost me quite a struggle to enter into controversy with him, and I who had gone so many miles to meet him would have gone as far to have avoided him could I have reconciled it with my duty. But subsequently this feeling passed away, as the reader will find. Before answering him, I told Mr. Fleming that I expected he would have prefaced his first speech by an apology for the course (under erroneous impression, I was willing to believe) which he had taken in reference to me, especially in his letter in the *Lancaster Guardian*. Instead of doing so, he affected to be the outraged person himself, and much more of the same kind not now worth recording. I restricted myself then to telling Mr. Fleming, that I should not ask him twice if his own feelings as a gentleman did not dictate to him the *amende* he should make. The Rev. Mr. Hereford said the entertainment of a personal question was incompatible with the solemn subject to be considered. But it seemed to me that Mr. Hereford overlooked that the appropriate prelude to approaching a solemn subject, is to make clean our hands. The temper of justice is the basis of all healthy awe.

During my lecture I had occasion to say, that the death of Christ as an expiation, called the central fact of the Christian system, was to me an appalling circumstance to contemplate. In noticing this remark, Mr. Fleming said twice, 'we had that night heard a great deal of the *bloody cruelty of God*.' When he repeated this the second time, I rose and said, 'I thought my reverend opponent was labouring under some misapprehension. I believed that we had not heard that coarse, and, as many would regard it, painful phrase from any lips but his own; and I must protest against its being put into my mouth by its repetition as though I had used it.' Mr. Fleming did not repeat it again. Overlooking an important distinction I laboriously kept before the audience, Mr. Fleming emphatically asserted that I denounced *all* authority—whereas my argument went only to substitute the authority of reason for the authority of names and faith.

He also introduced, in refutation of my argument, an extraordinary parallel between the Queen and God; so unique was it, that it excited the wonder of the orthodox no less than the wonder of the heterodox.

Probably Mr. Fleming spoke an hour. He did not make speeches for me to reply to, but put to me questions of examination and cross examination. I submitted to every form of interrogation, and answered point by point in any way desired of me. Had I had anything to conceal, that mode of procedure would have taken advantage of me. But I did not object to it. I did not even ask myself whether it was fair or not. I regarded it as good exercise for a young debater, who ought to be equal to every emergency and every form of attack.

The impression produced by this night's debate is best shown in the following letter, which appeared the next afternoon in the *Lancaster Guardian*, entitled—

THE REV. J. FLEMING AND MR. GEORGE J. HOLYOAKE.

Mr. Editor,—I have no wish, could you afford me the opportunity, of intruding on your columns the arguments in favour of Christianity in comparison with those advanced by the advocates of infidelity; but, with your permission, I would advert as briefly as I can to matters of a personal nature arising out of the controversy on this important subject. I am only speaking the sentiments of numbers of persons, all of whom with myself dissent *in toto* from the peculiar tenets of Mr. Holyoake—all of whom, however, are the advocates of unshackled inquiry—when I inform Mr. Fleming, through your instrumentality, that the manner in which he has thought fit to treat a gentleman, whose courtesy and fairness are unequalled, whose truthfulness and honesty of opinion no man can impeach, whose moral character is untainted—has not been such as to reflect credit on himself as a gentleman and a minister of the gospel, but has rather tended to the disparagement of those glorious doctrines of which he is a public exponent.

I do not quarrel with Mr. Fleming for one moment, as I understand a rev. gentleman, of a somewhat pugnacious mood, thought fit to do at the Bible meeting, for introducing to the audience assembled in the Odd-fellows' Hall, the evidences of the truth of Christianity in contrast with those of a contrary belief. I believe that the Christianity of the New Testament will be more appreciated if it is better known. I believe that Christianity will bear the inquiry of reason, and that nothing is more repulsive to its teaching than that it should be enfolded in an air of mystery which it is blasphemous to disclose, or that it should attach to its votaries by the fears of a blind superstition. But I do quarrel with Mr. Fleming for invoking a discussion which he either could not or does not feel inclined to sustain—that he has thereby exhibited a weakness which will tell strongly in favour of the cause which Mr. Holyoake advocates.

Mr. Fleming's position is this. He addresses an audience on the subject of infidelity. He reprobates particular works, and holds up to public execration a particular production of Mr. Holyoake's, which he represents as having an 'immoral' tendency, and he challenges any infidel to vindicate the authenticity of his opinions, and he will meet him, and prove the truth of all that he had stated. Who so competent to vindicate his own works as Mr. Holyoake himself? This gentleman, feeling himself aggrieved by the imputation of immorality, accepts the challenge. To this Mr. Fleming at first demurs—forgetting that Mr. Holyoake has a personal claim upon him, owing to the selection of his works as the objects of his attack—on the ground that his challenge was only intended for infidels present in that room! He afterwards states that if Mr. Holyoake considers himself wronged, 'let him come to Lancaster and defend what he has written, in a series of lectures, and I will be prepared to reply to them.'

This appears fair and honest and honourable. But how does Mr. Fleming 'reply?' He does not attend the first lecture of Mr. Holyoake. At the second

he does make his appearance, and instead of 'replying,' he states positively that he has no intention of replying in Mr. Holyoake's presence, that he merely wishes to obtain his opinions, and when he has left the town, when he is not present to correct any misapprehension or misconception, then will Mr. Fleming 'enjoy' the 'opportunity' which was offered to him on the evening of each lecture.

Sir, I again repeat, that with Mr. Holyoake's doctrines I cannot concur. But I recognise his right to perfect freedom of thought and speech. I recognise his claims to fair and honourable dealing, and particularly by those who claim as one of the golden principles of our Saviour, that glorious aspiration of charity and love—'Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you.'

#### A WORKING MAN.

This letter could not have been written by a 'working man,' in the sense of the writer being an artisan. Such a person would not have had influence enough to have prevailed on the editor to have inserted such a letter. It is proof that other persons must have been favourably impressed, so far as to vindicate my right to freedom of opinion and fair play. Certainly my acknowledgments are due to the assumed 'Working Man,' and to the *Guardian*, for admitting his letter.

On the third night Mr. Fleming appeared altogether a different person. His tone was kind and his language courteous, and I quite forgot all the unpleasantnesses which had preceded. The interrogations were as incessant as on preceding nights. Among other things, Mr. Fleming said he 'did not intend to say that I was an immoral person. He had inquired previously to my coming to Lancaster, and learned that my private character was satisfactory.'

It appeared to me that Mr. Fleming modified some of the views he was understood to maintain. He took credit that neither himself nor the audience held the notions of eternal punishment I had described—which were the orthodox and evangelical doctrines. Of course I was glad to find that Mr. Fleming and the Christians of Lancaster were advanced somewhat near the Unitarian point of generous conception of the character of God. I pressed Mr. Fleming to explain his own views—to say distinctly whether he did or did not believe in eternal punishment. If he did, there was no value in his repudiation of my statements. If he did not, he admitted an important point that I was anxious to establish. Twice or thrice I pressed this question, but Mr. Fleming appeared always not to hear me, and never noticed my request nor explained his own creed on this interesting subject. Certainly Mr. Fleming on another point was honourably explicit. He conceded the rightfulness of discussion—of freedom of opinion—my right to differ from the Christian—and I understood him to admit the moral innocence of dissent. The effect of these admissions was very striking on the audience: many seemed to breathe more freely than before. It is doubtless very sad that the spirit of a people should wait on a priest's concessions, but that seemed to be the case in Lancaster.

I should endeavour to recount more of the points Mr. Fleming raised, and some remarks I made in reply; but I shall have an opportunity of printing Mr. Fleming's own report of the proceedings, and I would rather present his version than my own. Before concluding I told him that I should be ready, at his convenience, to enter into public discussion with him on the questions involved in my lectures and his. He answered, his duties were heavy, and as a Professor his time, I would allow, must be fully occupied; but either in the newspapers, or through a publication, or by a pamphlet, he would examine my lectures. It was my part to offer him discussion, it was his to decline it, or adopt any mode of holding it that seemed

sufficient or suitable to him—and the privilege of doing so I fully and unreservedly conceded to him. The reader will see from a notice next week that Mr. Fleming is fulfilling his promise in one of the ways he proposed.

Mr. Johnson, on this night, inquired in what sense I used the word nature. I answered, in the sense of Paley and Coleridge, as an aggregate name for the sum of phenomena. The definition might have been larger, but—sufficient to the day 'is the evil thereof' (?). Mr. Johnson replied:

'Was the idea of nature, in the sense in which I used it, more simple, or was it not less instructive, than the idea of God—denoting so many attributes of moral excellence?' The attributes he mentioned were seven in number: I have now lost their enumeration. I said that I thought Nature, with its observable attributes, was simpler than the metaphysical conception of Deity, with imaginary, at least abstract, ones. Mr. Johnson added some practical cases relative to personal piety, and put them in a devout spirit. The Rev. Mr. Hereford's questions related chiefly to free-will and its consequences, and all his suppositions as to my views were just. When Mr. Johnson explained an idea on this subject, he apologised for some incoherence in his statement, and said 'he put his case even more illogically than the Rev. Mr. Hereford.' Mr. Hereford (who really had put the case better) here bowed very low at the compliment, and the pantomime was diverting, and the audience, who caught the allusion, shared in the spirit. Though I had to leave Lancaster at four the next morning, Mr. Johnson besought me, at a late hour, to prolong the replies, to which I answered that I was quite agreeable to stay responding till the train went. It was approaching twelve before the meeting separated. The discussion this night was as instructive to me as the spirit was pleasant in which the opponents conducted it. It was to me the most valuable night I remember to have spent on a platform. Before leaving the room, Mr. Hereford and Mr. Johnson, and some other gentlemen, came and shook hands in a friendly manner.

The chief constable did us the honour to be an auditor on the second night, and to place four policemen in readiness to preserve the peace. To whom this courtesy was owing I know not, probably to Mr. Johnson; but I addressed a letter of acknowledgments to the head of the police.

On the latter nights several ladies were present, and some distinguished members of Mr. Fleming's congregation. Mr. Fleming is a younger and a handsomer man, but in style of oratory resembles, as well as in darkness of complexion, the Rev. Robert Montgomery, the fashionable metropolitan preacher, otherwise known as 'Satan Montgomery.'

The *Lancaster Gazette*, whose fascinating leader on 'Infidel Lecturers and how to treat them' has been quoted, had the following paragraph in its next number:—'The person to whom we had occasion to allude last week, as likely to visit the town in defence of infidel doctrines, has for three nights past lectured at one of our public-houses, and we are sorry to say the attendance has been very numerous. Of course many would go to "hear the fun," and come away affected neither one way nor the other; but it is to be feared that, with others, seed has been sown which the common enemy of mankind will in due time ripen to a harvest of never-ending sorrow.'

The *Guardian*, always more courteous, the same week made this report:—'On the evenings of Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday last, Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, the author of the "Logic of Death," an atheistical pamphlet, and editor of the *Reasoner* periodical, delivered three lectures in the New Inn Concert Room, Market Street, in advocacy of his opinions. It will be remembered that the



"Logic of Death" was introduced by the Rev. J. Fleming, in one of his lectures in the Odd-Fellows' Hall, and its arguments examined and criticised. Mr. Holyoake, feeling aggrieved by some expression in one of the lectures, imputing to his work an "immoral" tendency, accepted a challenge to vindicate his writings and opinions. The subject of the first lecture was, "The case stated between atheism and theism, with a view to show the moral innocency of speculative opinions, even the most extreme, if conscientiously held." The universe, according to Mr. Holyoake's definition, is "material, self-existent, and eternal," governed by a collection of laws to which he gives the name of Nature. In the second lecture he attempted to show that the Christian code, as a system of morals, was defective. Yesterday evening he proposed to prove that "Catholicism was consistent Christianity, and the actual type of the churches around us, all of which alike excite personal distrust and public alarm." At the close of each lecture some discussion arose, any one in the room being at liberty to propose any question to the speaker. On Thursday evening Mr. Fleming attended the lecture, and questioned Mr. H., with a view of eliciting his opinions, in order that he might reply to them "at the proper time." The audiences on each evening were very numerous. Though we do not believe that Mr. Holyoake will have added a single convert to the roll of atheism, his courtesy of demeanour and the sincerity and honesty with which he avows his opinions, entitled and secured to him a dispassionate hearing.

Each night I was the solitary occupant of the orchestra. I had no one to preside. I was my own chairman, and I was lecturer, respondent, and master of ceremonies in general, from first to last. On the Sunday following prayers were put up for me in several places in Lancaster. Mr. Fleming directed the Sunday school to pray for me. The prayer he offered up was to the effect that the Lord had done good in causing me to come to Lancaster. It had been the means of showing the people how men may be led away by following reason instead of the true light of faith. It appears that some surprise has been felt that I should have had audiences so large on the three last meeting nights of the week, and at three-pence admission. My reason for this choice was, that in an uncertain town I neither wanted to meet a crowd nor a rabble, as the rude are often sent to our open meetings, and when they incite disturbance the responsibility is shifted from the real authors. Respectable people have character to maintain, and do not commit themselves personally. The crowning drollery is that a meeting has since been announced in Lancaster by the crier, who was instructed to end his oration with these words—'You paid three-pence to hear an unbeliever; come and hear a believer for nothing!' I have not been apprised of the effect of this superb appeal—it *ought* to have proved irresistible.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### THOMAS COOPER IN SCOTLAND.

We were delighted to receive a letter informing us that Mr. Cooper has passed from Belfast to Glasgow. We should like to know what our Irish friends thought of him, who is a species of Meagher of progress. This is Mr. Cooper's first visit to Scotland, with which we hope he will have reason to be as pleased as he deserves to be. Incomparably the most attractive of all our metropolitan lecturers, critical Scotland will be curious to hear him—who has lent lustre to Chartism, interest to Socialism, and power to freedom of opinion. Dere devil Wallace, brave old Knox, gallant Robert Burns, and sly old Geordie Buchanan, have often been his eloquent themes; and now the author of the 'Purgatory of Suicides' is himself in the land of heroes, poetry, and poets. This, I know from recent inquiries made of me while in Scotland, our friends will be glad to learn. The towns desiring Mr. Cooper's presence should communicate at once with him, at Mr. Charles Clarke's, 152, Buccleugh Street, Glasgow, where he will be before this notice is read in Scotland.

G. J. H.

### Examination of the Press.

**SAINT ROBERT BURNS.**—Nobody binds up the Assembly's Catechism, longer or shorter, with 'Murray's Grammar' interleaved in the same volume. The fallacy in argument is a fiction in fact. Another point was the alleged success of the old Kirk in the management of the parochial schools. To illustrate this, Sir R. Inglis, in the House of Commons, enumerated a host of eminent men who had been trained in them, and ascribed to that management the high character in which Scotch education was held for above a century. He named Robert Burns! He did not allude to the 'Holy Fair,' nor recite the 'Prayer of Holy Willie.' No reminiscences of the bard's unceremonious treatment of Mother Kirk and her 'unco guid' sons, chequered the imperturbable brass of the bigot Baronet. 'Rantin Robin,' for the first time in his history, was made to shine as a jewel in the saintly crown of the Scotch Kirk. This will be rare news for the Presbytery of Ayr. And, then, it may be asked, what was the state of the Kirk during the period that the worth of its schools was attested by the appearance of so many illustrious men, poets, historians, metaphysicians, economists, and politicians? Why, it was the heretical era of the Kirk. It was the age of latitudinarianism. It was the time of 'new light,' when so many of its preachers told the suspicion 'that three's one and twa,' whatever the Confession may say to the contrary. It was the season when scepticism and infidelity were rife in Scotland, and held their court in Edinburgh. Was the school then far behind the Kirk, or the Dominie much sounder than the Minister? Besides, that great fact, the Free Church, is fatal to the claims of the Established Clergy to school dominion. They are no longer the people's clergy. Children cannot be allowed to remain under their rod when adults have broken their bonds.—*Publicola*, in *Weekly Dispatch*, June 7, 1851.

**THE MYSTERIOUS RAPPING.**—The *Buffalo Courier*, in an article upon the Rochester knockings, publishes the following, and vouches for its truth:—'A young man called, a day or two since, upon the ladies in whose keeping are the Rochester spirits. His bearing was sad, and his voice was tremulous with emotion. Sorrow was in his countenance, and a weed was on his hat. He sighed as he took a seat, and the by-standers pitied him as they saw him draw forth a spotless handkerchief and wipe away a tear that gathered in his eye. After a few moments of silence he took one of the ladies aside, and requested, if consistent, to be put in communication with the spiritual essence of his mother, and here he wiped his eyes rapidly, and sobbed. A period of quiet elapsed, and a knock was heard, signifying that the desired correspondence could be had, and with a hesitating voice the young man commenced questioning the invisible one. 'How long had I gone before you died?' A length of time was stated.—'Where are you now, mother? Are you happy?' The knocking indicated that the spirit was at rest.—'Are those of your friends who have gone before with you?'—'They are,' said the knocking.—'Then you can recognise them perfectly?'—The noise certified the affirmative.—'Can you see me at all times when you wish?'—The raps proclaimed the perpetual clearness of the shaker's vision in that respect.—The gentleman seemed relieved, and the spectators stood overwhelmed with wonder. Taking his hat, the mourner arose, thanking the ladies, and as he stood in the door quietly remarked—'I have been very much entertained, as no doubt my mother herself will be, for I left her at home not half an hour since, basting a turkey for dinner?'—*Athenæum*, June 7, 1851.

## The Philosophic Type of Religion,

DEVELOPED BY PROFESSOR NEWMAN: STATED AND EXAMINED.

BY G. J. HOLYOAKE.

### INTRODUCTION.

IN 1847 a volume was published by Chapman, entitled 'The Soul, Her Sorrows and Her Aspirations.' The author was Francis William Newman, the brother of John Henry Newman, known now as 'Father Newman,' Father Newman represents the Catholic, Professor Newman, the author of the work here considered, represents the Rationalistic side of Religion.

The Church of England seldom gives you the impression of being in earnest. Its hierarchy seems maintained for show. You must visit the ranks of Evangelism for the religion which has life. Mr. Newman seems to personify the evangelical aspect of piety. He has caught up the whole spirit of religion in its profoundest meaning, and passing it through the crucible of a cultivated intellect and pure nature, he presents us with the phenomenon of religion made (as far as the present writer thinks it can be) moral and philosophic.

The casual observer of religious sects must be aware of the variety of types extant. To speak of them with any justice or precision, they must be distinguished into low, intermediate, and high. Mr. Newman represents the highest type. As I know very well that many people who profess the lower forms of the Christian Faith, would not do so were they acquainted with a higher, delineated by the hand of one whose piety cannot be called in question, I have made here an abstract of Mr. Newman's views. And I shall thus be able to bring it under the notice of many Christians who never heard of Mr. Newman's work, and who could not buy it if they would, and (to tell the whole truth) would not buy it if they could, till some one has shown to them its safety. This book has instruction also for my own friends, as will appear as I proceed; but as I am anxious for the rationalisation of Christianity, I take an interest in all that approximates to what I think the truth, and hence I publish this review of a work, upon which I have spoken by choice in many parts of the country. If men cannot see as I see, I shall be glad for them to see as Mr. Newman sees.

Those who make it a rule to pass over the Preface of a book as not relating to it,

will profit in this case by returning to the good old practice of reading it. Nowhere does Mr. Newman appear to write unless he has something to say, and whatever he sees well to say is worthy the reader's consideration. It is in the preface that Mr. Newman remarks, that 'a long period passed in the history of mankind when the Morality of every great national system was supposed to depend entirely on the external authority which promulgated it; ..... but in later stages of mental culture, the authoritative sanction which is superadded to moral precepts became valued, not as that which is essential to guarantee their truth to a cultivated moral nature, but as that which (like parental command) enforces action while the moral sense is in its infancy.' In this respect Mr. Newman agrees with Sir James Mackintosh, that morals are intrinsically independent. That theology may add a sanction to them, but does not *create* them. One great charm of Mr. Newman's book is its remarkable *directness* of language. Whether there are any subjects upon which the author would be reserved or mystical I know not, but it seems that he does not write on any subject upon which he does not choose to be explicit. Emerson is an Oracle often admitting of a double interpretation, Carlyle is a riddle by the way-side, puzzling all passers by—but Newman discourses manly wisdom in simple and youthful language.

It seems a light matter to say that each page is reliable. When Mr. Newman describes Fetichism, for instance, it is an addition to our knowledge which we can quote. The reader can trust it—and such an assurance is a boundless satisfaction to one who desires to learn as he reads. Of large historical knowledge, knowing the most important languages, able in mathematics, versed in practical sciences, quick to comprehend, and more than all conscientious to report, Mr. Newman fulfils all the requirements of the reader, who feels that what the author states he has verified, and that he speaks on matters of fact with the authority of nature. It is difficult for the well-favoured reader to estimate the value of such an author to the ill-favoured learner. The poor student belonging to the working classes, whose every day is

engrossed beyond his strength in the battle for the supply of animal wants, and who is turned at night wearied (like a jaded horse into a barren field) to browse on the casualties of literature—the cheap periodicals; so often got up without adequate means, and oftener without conscience; where that which is original is poor, and that which is borrowed is incorrect—inferior food, of which no quantity yields any strength! To children of the people, to whom scholastic guidance is never vouchsafed, beguiled by a show of popular learning which seduces them and abandons them to mediocrity, such a book as this—profound in thought, affectionate in spirit, trusty in report, accurate in speech,—is an epoch in personal history, disciplining the understanding, and giving a new tone to character.

The modest object of this book is that of making contribution towards a natural History of the Soul as the true basis of Theology. What may be accomplished in this direction in the way of scientific proof is not quite clear, but that this is the right way of procedure we have no doubt. The analysis of feeling, and of the presumptive evidence on the side of human estimate of Deity, has long appeared to me as the only ground on which the believer could ever win the ear of the world; and it was with curiosity I learned that the first part of this ground had been occupied by Mr. Newman. He has furnished an entirely new statement of Theology: a statement we know to be *new* because it presents an old subject without once reviving those sensations of which once-believers dread the repetition. It is the first *religious* book I have been able to read for years, and I have read it many times as an exercise, in order to thoroughly understand the highest case which has been presented on the religious side.

I have looked into some modern books which have attained celebrity in pointing out the errors of popular Christianity, but they seemed to me not to differ from older ones except in amplification of former arguments. They were urged with more decorousness than was formerly the case, because the subsidence of dangerous persecution has left play for the manifestation of the gentlemanly tone, but there has been no more *feeling* than before in the efforts. The surgeon has removed the diseased part, or perhaps amputated the limb very cleverly, and taken his fee of public applause as a skilful operator, but he has displayed no personal sympathy with his patient. In Mr. Newman's case it is alto-

gether different. He is a spiritual surgeon, and never forgets that his patient is his brother. You may feel pain under his hand, but you are persuaded his is the hand under which you will suffer least, and that his affection and intelligence will save you all he can.\* He is the friend and never the opponent. He does not offend you by spiritual superciliousness. There is no tone of pride about him. There is no lie for the glory of God in him: he does not recognise that God can be glorified by any word of deceit. To disparage, to mortify, to obtain a victory over you, are pettinesses of controversy which he despises. He is never angry, petulant, or harsh. He never plays the priest—soft and gracious when his argument opens, menacing, imperious, and contemptuous when it closes, and is not accepted. His profound respect for others, for their sincerity and well meaning, is uninterrupted. Yet in all this gentleness there mingles no weakness. Every affectionate word is animated by a masculine strength of will, and in this union of both qualities a great lesson in intellectual and moral discipline is afforded. No man, whether believer or atheist, can read this book without great improvement, unless he be very good indeed, or entirely incapable of moral appreciation. †

I do not suppose that the Christian world will be thankful for this book. They seldom discriminate their true friends, and, I think, never are grateful to them. To some sour effusion of evangelism which contradicts Christianity's capacity for charity—to some subtle treatise which confounds but does not convince, they would give an exuberant welcome; but for a book like this, conceived in the highest genius of proselytism, which must *command* respect for the religious sentiment wherever it is read, they have had no word of thankfulness. ‡ That which strikes me as the secret of its proselytising power is its wondrous candour. All other religious books which I have read seemed to me to be *feencing* with the reader. They never trust him or trust themselves. There is nothing out-spoken, frank, and chivalrous: all seems to be cautious, giving one the idea there is something to conceal. Mr. Newman's book is marked by

\* First said in 1848: we are now in 1851, and no other book has yet appeared bearing the same marks.

† At least none have yet come under my notice.

the utter absence of this tone. Knowing that no earnest men are wholly in the wrong in matters of humanity, he does not fear to admit what is right on his opponent's side, which certainly does not indispose an opponent to admit what is right on his. He thus inspires you with confidence and respect, and this is the foundation of all healthy concurrence. This predisposing element to uniformity Mr. Newman's book has above all others I have read. If one does not concur in it, it is because of the presence of intellectual error—no prejudice stands between his reader and himself. Others, besides Christians, who study its ability, may learn of its wisdom of manner, in the written and oral advocacy of their views.

No review of this book has come under my notice which at all conveys the spirit of it, and I much distrust my own power to supply what I feel to be wanting. All accounts of its daringness, of its strong rejection of so much to which the mass of believers cling in indiscriminating adoration, constitute the framework of the book, without its life—indeed less than that, for such accounts are merely those of the clearing of the ground in order to occupy it by a new superstructure. And no adequate idea of the superstructure can be obtained except by reading the book. A perfect book is ever its own best reporter, and so it is in this case. A faint approximation is all I can promise.

#### PART I. THE STATEMENT.

'All human knowledge, like human power, is bounded; and it is then most accurate, when we can sharply draw the line which shows where ignorance begins' (p. 1.) With this remark, so pregnant with purpose, Mr. Newman opens his inquiry into what we know, that shall, when distinctly defined, justify a programme of religious belief. He accurately observes that 'It is a condition of human existence to be surrounded with but a moderately diffused light, that instructs the understanding, and illimitable haziness that excites the imagination' (p. 1.) The foundation of Mr. Newman's system, he frankly permits us to perceive lies in the fact that this 'obscurity' without us, is calculated to call forth religious sentiments. 'The region of dimness is not wholly without relations to our moral state.' The great theological problem he proposes to solve was never so happily expressed before, viz., how 'to reconcile Passion, Prudence, Duty, Free Thought, and Reverence' (p. 4.)

In the relation of the child to the parent Mr. Newman sees the model of human life throughout its entire extent. In the 'loving reverence, sure trust, and unreflecting joy, which a child may exercise towards a parent, whose wisdom and goodness appear to him illimitable,' Mr. Newman beholds 'a source of moral perfection' desirable for men 'whose understandings have opened wide enough to see that all human minds are limited, all human hearts shallow, and that no object worthy of absolute reverence comes within the reach of sense.' (p. 3.) It is this 'absolute object' which Mr. Newman seeks. In his search he takes for his guide a definition of the Soul, which is entitled to the rank of a discovery. He calls the 'Soul that side of our nature, by which we are in contact with the Infinite.' Religion he would seem to regard as the cultivation of this side of our nature, by bringing it into contact with an object of absolute perfection and goodness, which shall inspire us with aspirations after purity, and cheer us by rational hope. There is a freshness in all Mr. Newman's conceptions which, after the hard, acid, and incongruous theology of the pulpits, comes over the feelings like a charm. The fruits of this religion which he eliminates are, he tells us, 'Meekness, thankfulness, love, contentment, compassion, humility, patience, resignation, disinterestedness, purity, aspiration, devoutness' (p. 21.)

By an analysis of human sentiments Mr. Newman delineates the 'Sense of the Infinite.' The processes are these:—

1. Awe, that feeling with which darkness inspires us, of which we are sensible in a walk alone by night under thick trees, when a sense of the unknown pierces through and unmans all but innocence. The moral effect of Awe is a pervading sense of our littleness in the presence of immensity (p. 11.)

2. Wonder, that feeling excited by the sublime and astonishing scenes of Nature when Awe has somewhat subsided. Its moral attribute is an aspiration after fuller knowledge of that 'power, principle, or person, out of which all that we see has proceeded' (p. 13.)

3. Admiration is the perception of natural Beauty, whose appropriate function is to call forth the heart into admiration and prepare it for love. As a glimpse of life beyond the grave, and a glance of the eye into the depths of space, are adapted to calm stormy passions, so a tranquil resting of the soul, on whatever form of beauty, tends to impart cheerfulness, elasticity of

spirits, and mute thankfulness, towards—perhaps we know not *whom* (p. 19.)

Mr. Newman's conception of the functions of these sentiments is as lofty as it is delicate. Awe, Wonder, Admiration, he regards as fitting man to discharge his duty in that perilous hour when Duty clashes with Interest. Enthusiasm, that passionate love for some idea, which whatever form it may take, is capable of animating man to every sacrifice of Self, Mr. Newman regards as the Life of Morality, and the one universal enthusiasm he thinks is that 'called out by a sense of the Infinite, wherein we feel Self to be swallowed up. All the *generous* side of human nature is nurtured and expanded by the contemplation of the Infinite' (p. 26.)

4. A 'Sense of Order' Mr. Newman traces from the operations of nature. Order is the type of Unchangeableness, and 'the recognition of unchangeableness is the turning point and passage from barbarian to cultivated religion.' The perception of Universal Order involves the refutation of Polytheism. The One who is regarded as the Supreme (source of order) is considered to have ruled upon the same principles in every conceivable age, and here an idea of his Eternity comes in. At this point and after, a man's religion falls under the control of his understanding: henceforth contemplations and imaginations concerning the Infinite put on the coherent form of thought and Speculation. A new element has been admitted which will either dissolve all the rest, or by blending with them happily will give to the religion definiteness of form, consistency, and notions which can abide the criticism of acute incredulity (pp. 28-9.)

5. Sense of Design. To those who fail to recognise an active Will in the universe, Mr. Newman addresses the consideration of design. Without antagonist argument or intrusion of human artifice, he takes things fresh from nature. Lungs are fitted to breathe and eyes to see, and in this Fitness he sees Design. 'No syllogism is pretended that *proves* that a lung was made to breathe, but we see it,' he says, 'by what some call Common Sense, and some Intuition' (p. 32.) And 'since the whole universe is pervaded by similar instances of fitnesses, not to see a Universal Mind in nature appears almost a brutal insensibility; and if any one intelligently profess Atheism, the more acute he is, the

more distinctly we perceive that he is deficient in the Religious Faculty. Possibly some day, by a new development of his character or by the contagion of sympathy, he may acquire Religious Insight; but for the present we lament that he has it not, and hereby is cut off from the profoundest influences of humanity' (p. 33.) Holding that the Fitnesses which meet our view on all sides bring a reasonable proof that Design lies beneath them, Mr. Newman considers the doctrine of an *intelligent Creator* justified. Adding now the conclusion drawn from the Order of the universe, he avers that 'we have testimony adapted to the cultivated judgment that there is a Boundless Eternal Unchangeable Designing Mind, not without whom this system of things coheres: and this Mind is called God' (p. 34.)

6. Sense of Goodness. The conception of the goodness of God Mr. Newman arrives at. 'God is too great to be moved by petty passions; he cannot have pleasure in our misery.' We 'attribute to him boundlessness of every kind of which we can conceive, and a pure, final, and consolatory idea of God's goodness Mr. Newman expresses in these words:—'All the possible perfectness of man's spirit must be a mere faint shadow of the divine perfection.'

7. The sense of Wisdom differs from Goodness in this, that 'Goodness is seen in the choice of *ends*, Wisdom in the direction of the *means*.' The antagonist Divine wisdom has to overcome consists of the *human will*, which Mr. Newman regards as independent.

8. The sense of Reverence is that which follows the discernment of a mighty and inscrutable Being in the Universe. Reverence is the beginning of true religion. He who reverences God is a religious man, and whatever his other defects, is an accepted worshipper. The source of reverence Mr. Newman seems to place in the perception that the great power who presides over Nature must needs possess *Moral* qualities *similar to our own*, though every way more perfect. It is this feature that raises what was Paganism into Rational Religion. In such a portraiture of God as this, so consonant to the moral sense, commending him to the affections by its sweetness and to the intellect by its purity, how gentle and yet how effectual is the refutation of the gloomy picture of the avenging Deity our popular theology preaches to us.

(To be continued.)

## LECTURE ON IRRELIGIOUS BOOKS.

THE discussion amongst the members of the Botchergate Working Men's Reading Room on the admissibility into their library of Paine's 'Age of Reason,' and other anti-Christian books, appears to have stirred up a good deal of controversial animosity among the frequenters of that institution; and the decision come to, last week, by a small majority, to accept Mr. Mounsey's offer of a plot of ground, on the condition that the books referred to shall be excluded, has not healed the breach, although it has for the present settled the dispute. Accordingly the dissentients were instrumental in engaging Mr. G. J. Holyoake, of London, editor of a sceptical publication called the *Reasoner*, to deliver a lecture upon the subject, on Tuesday, May 20th. The Athenæum could not be obtained, and the long room of the Blue Bell Inn, Scotch Street, was therefore engaged for the purpose. The room was densely crowded, and the audience included several of the working classes who are not members of the reading room—the total number being probably about 300. Several were unable to get admission. The room, being imperfectly ventilated, even with the windows open, was insufferably hot, and redolent of what Jack Falstaff would have termed a villanous compound of bad smells. The interest evinced was intense, and the satisfaction expressed with the views propounded by the lecturer unmistakeable. Mr. Hugh Campbell was called to the chair, and in a few brief observations introduced the lecturer. Mr. Holyoake is above the average stature—is spare and somewhat lanky in person, has a weak and rather squeaking voice, but, barring an occasional 'Haitch' betraying Cockney birth,\* speaks with correctness and fluency. His lecture consisted chiefly of general propositions asserting the right of freedom of thought and opinion, regardless of everything but truth; and these propositions he brought to bear on the particular question of the evening—though that was either overlaid with generalities or glanced at incidentally. A newspaper is not the proper medium for such discussions, but as the lecture had immediate reference to one of the *veacate questiones* now agitating the working classes of this city, it may not be improper to give a skeleton sketch of some of the salient points touched upon.

Mr. Holyoake began by expressing his regret that by the refusal of the Athenæum the audience had been forced into a small and inconvenient room, especially as no moral or intellectual harm could come out of his lecture, wherever delivered. Christians, he said, laboured under the impression that all the outrage of feeling was on the side of the infidels; but he reminded them that much of what Christians believed and uttered was equally outrageous to their opponents. He claimed the right to think for himself. No man could relieve him of his responsibility to God, and no man should dictate the opinions he should hold or the creed he should subscribe to—for they could not give him a guarantee about the future: and all its problems of life, and time, and death, were as much his business as any other man's, and he must solve them for himself as he best could. He de-

\* The number present was at least 400, judging by the crowd; and as many as those named by this reporter were turned away from the doors. The platform was so thronged that I was compelled to stand on a chair in order to be seen, and the small area of an arm chair was all the room allowed me. It must have been this elevation on so slender a pedestal which made me appear 'lanky' in the eyes of the reporter. The occasional 'Haitch' must have been owing to the density of the atmosphere. It was not possible to get the vowels out in clearness or purity in such a thick and 'villanous compound' of inhalation as that of which the reporter complains—it could not have been owing to Cockney birth, as I happen to be a native of Birmingham.—G. J. H.

manded liberty to pursue his own course, as all the consequences must finally be on his own head. The reason of his coming here was the discussion published in the local newspapers on the admission of irreligious books into the working man's reading rooms. So far as the controversy was concerned, he thought there was much to amend on both sides. What astonished him most was that such a number of persons should be forgetful of what was due to one of their most illustrious countrymen—Thomas Paine. He then entered at length into a vindication of Paine's political and moral character. When he lived it was dangerous to think as he thought. His life and liberty were perpetually in danger. The friend of Burke and Washington he was one of the great means, through his pen, of giving America her freedom, and his strong sense was employed in vindicating the principles of liberty all over the world. The advocate of morality and order, he sacrificed himself to some of his best friends when he published his 'Age of Reason,' and made himself a martyr to the opinions he avowed and with which the world had since so virulently quarrelled. He regretted that towards such a man the harsh expressions indulged in during the recent controversy should have been employed. He contended that Paine's works, as well as others, styled irreligious, should be included in the libraries of all reading rooms where the working classes were to be fairly and properly educated. The clergy were fond of denouncing Paine as an irreligious man; they did the same with Voltaire and Robespierre; and called them Atheists. They were not so, but believers in God, and in their lifetime were the only men who made contributions to the arguments proving the existence of a God—contributions of which he had heard clergymen avail themselves in the same sermons in which they denounced the authors of them. Adverting to the report of the discussion in the Athenæum relative to the condition of Mr. Mounsey's grant of land for a new reading room, the lecturer said the speech of the Dean was the speech of a gentleman—there was courtesy and good feeling in it. Mr. Mounsey appeared to be the only man who made the recognition that there might be conscience on the side of those opposed to the conditions. With respect to the rest, he never heard such a fuss made about £100 in his life; it gave the impression that the working classes of Carlisle were in a state of deplorable poverty, when £100 could be of such consequence to them. For his own part, while he would accept the money under such conditions as might be imposed, he would protest against the wisdom of those conditions—stating that the time would come when the Protestants would be able and obliged to create for themselves a new institution in which the proscribed books should be admissible. Just so with regard to education. If he had his wish, he would make it secular, but it was of such importance that he would willingly accept it with any admixture of religion rather than none at all. The word secular was misused. Institutions professedly excluded religion and politics, but there was not one in the kingdom where the profession was observed. The committee who managed them would one day refuse to let the room to a lecturer like himself, and the next they would let it to a clergyman—which was in effect putting down the minority, and giving the advantage to the dominant party. The Earl of Carlisle—the wisest, most useful, and most liberal of our earls—in opening an institution recently in London, said it would be open to all—no one would be excluded; but directly afterwards he said, 'As to the books, my friend the Vicar of St. James's will see to them.' Good manners and good feeling taught us to join in the society of men of all opinions or no opinions at all on religion; and yet, while it was deemed proper to meet them in person and on an equality,



their books, expressing their honest opinions, were most inconsistently rejected as inadmissible. If institutions were to be made really secular, all books should be excluded, except those relating to science, history, and criticism—not the best course, in his opinion, but the course that was forced upon them by the impossibility of men meeting together and learning each other's opinions on the solemn topics which were placed under ban. If they were more manly, better-informed, and braver—if they had more confidence in truth than they appeared to have—they would say, 'Let every one express his opinions as he pleases, and we will trust to the issue, whatever it be.' Mr. Mounsey had acknowledged that the opponents of the conditions of his grant might be perfectly conscientious in their views. And what were £100 compared to a man's conscience? 'What mattered it to a man if he gained the whole world, if he lost his own soul?' A man's conscience ought to be dearer to him than money, and no man should suffer it to be bribed. Why did Christians prefer Christianity to Mahomedanism, Buddhism, or Paganism, but because, looking at its evidences, promises, and professions, they believed it to be the most reasonable of them all? They had a right to hold their opinions on that point; and he claimed the right to hold his on the same ground of reasonability. He might be mistaken—they might be mistaken. As far as he could judge he was right, and his persistence in his opinions had involved him in many disadvantages. He could not take an oath, if it was to be held as a profession of faith, and he thus was prevented from recovering property of which he had been deprived; and for avowing faithfully his honest convictions with regard to religious matters he had been sent to prison by Judge Erskine for six months. Men holding his opinions were treated much after the fashion of the witches of old, who were thumb-tied and thrown into a ditch—if they swam they were burned for witches, and if they sank they were drowned. The lecturer then gave a sketch of the philosophy of human belief and the progress of opinion—maintaining that every man should be allowed freely to utter his opinions, and truth left to take care of itself. If opinions were wrong or bad, free discussion would put them down—the only fair, honourable, and rightful way in which opinion ought to be put down. If the clergy and other Christians had the same confidence in their opinions that he had in his, they would give every man fair play, and not be afraid of the issue. A bad opinion or a bad book could not live among an intellectual people. If Paine's 'Age of Reason' was a bad book—if its language was coarse or vicious—it would create disgust in the minds of all, and the evil would work its own cure. While they were all grateful to Paine for what he did, they might allow that he had used many expressions which would not be used in the present day. But the fact was, the progress of opinion was now much beyond Paine. The 'Age of Reason' was nearly obsolete, and its arguments or principles were seldom referred to. There were better books for which people were more concerned now-a-days. Thus they had the books of the Rationalists of Germany; and if he wanted a model of a book—free from every possible fault—he would point to Professor Newman's 'Phases of Faith.' The perfection of kindness, modesty, wisdom, and a most careful consideration of the consciences of other men was in 'The Soul: her Sorrows and her Aspirations,' by the same author, who says the attributes of the religious man are humility, kindness, disinterestedness, service, love, and modesty. If these were the characteristics of Christianity, how kind and gentle ought Christians to be! Yet he was afraid the Dean of Carlisle would not sanction Mr. Newman's books for a Working Man's Reading Room. Briefly, he might say that the nature of the ground of controversy with

the Christian world had changed, and people in Carlisle seemed to know nothing about it. He would not hold a controversy on the 'Age of Reason,' which was simply a criticism on the alleged authenticity and inspiration of the Bible. He would not enter into a wordy cavil whether these things were true or false, for the discussion would leave no man wiser or better. If they told him miracles were performed, he replied he was sorry the day of miracles was gone by. If a man could now catch a fish with the income-tax in its mouth, and feed four or five thousand persons with a few loaves and fishes, the Poor Law Commissioners would make a king of him. If he were told there were true prophets, all that he was sorry for was that the race was extinct, for many things had happened which were not foretold, and it would have been better for us if they had been foretold—better for the working classes, and better for civil and religious liberty. As to the interpretation of the Bible, out of respect to a man he might argue it with him, but the argument would be useful to neither of them. To judge of its authenticity it was necessary to be acquainted with Arabic, Sanscrit, Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; and the multitude of people, as well as himself, were too busily occupied to study these languages. The Bible, therefore, was a dead letter to them and to him. If these things affected his eternal interest he must study them and judge for himself with his own eyes; he could not believe them at *second hand*, and trust his salvation to the possibility of the correctness of other persons' reports, or to the casualty of any man's interpretation. The only ground worth debating was whether Christian doctrines exalt mankind and afford them new inducements to virtuous conduct, and whether the examples set forth therein were such as could be referred to in the battle of freedom and truth in which they were all engaged. He was as much concerned about private virtue and public morality as Christians were. There must be public justice, order, and legal regulations by which justice should be done amongst men. If he differed from them it was because he believed there was a better way of accomplishing all these things than the way he attacked—and not because he had less regard for truth, honour, humanity, or duty. He agreed in all things, and he would only have Christians to deal with him as to the wisdom or folly of his views, not as to the integrity of his intentions. Surely no man would uphold the Christian religion longer than he believes it to be true; and if a man conscientiously protested against it as erroneous he should not be held up as an infidel, treacherous to truth. Chalmers, Whately, and Mackintosh had all admitted that religion and morality were independent of each other, morality having its own proper sanctions, and religion merely shedding a purer light over the whole domain of moral duty. But because the infidel's grounds of morality were different from the Christian's, it was unjust to say that he had no morality at all.

The lecturer concluded amidst loud applause, and offered to answer any question that might be put to him, but no one coming forward he again briefly addressed the meeting, and, after he had acknowledged the vote of thanks passed to him, the meeting broke up shortly before 10 o'clock.—*Carlisle Journal*.

#### JUSTICE IN WHITEHAVEN TO UNITARIANS.

THE magistrates of Whitehaven have had a case before them, in which Mr. Chas. Flinn was charged with assaulting Mr. Hagan, by religious profession a Unitarian, while delivering a lecture at the end of the Bulwark, a place usually devoted to open air preaching. Two witnesses proved the serious assault on Mr. Hagan, but the magistrates dismissed the case, on the ground that the address of the lecturer, which was on 'Progression,' was inciting a breach of the peace. Some

expressions relative to the divinity of Christ formed the offence, which the worthy magistrate pronounced 'highly culpable conduct.' The *Whitehaven Herald* informs us that the Rev. F. W. Wicks was upon the bench when this disreputable decision was given. Thus it appears that Mr. Flinn has these magistrates' approbation to play the ruffian whenever a Unitarian shall displease him touching the divinity of Christ.—*Leader*, June 14th.

**Reasoner Propaganda.**

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

W. J. B. (10s. weekly, Nos. 256 to 264 inclusive), 90s.—A Friend (per Mr. Watson), 5s.—Mr. P., Birmingham, 5s.—R. R. (per publisher), 1s.—J. Stoth, Birkenhead, 1s.—S. B., Vauxhall, 2s. 6d.—Mullier (for Vol. XI.), 1s.—Jas. Gray, 1s.—Wm. Farmer (per Mr. Saunders, Nottingham), 10s.—Wm. Lees (per ditto), 5s.—G. M. (per ditto), 4s.—J. S. (per ditto), 1s.—Veritas, Sunderland, 6d.—G. Smith, Salford, 1s.—Arthur Trevelyan, 100s.—Total, 227s.

All notices to correspondents, of propagandism, business, and directions, will be found on the wrapper of the monthly parts.

**GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.**

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square. June 22nd [7½], George Jacob Holyoake, 'The Art of Organisation.'  
Hall of Science, City Road.—June 22nd [7½], Walter Cooper, 'Christian Socialism.'  
Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—June 20th [8], a Discussion. 22nd, [7½], a lecture.  
National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—June 22nd, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.  
Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'  
Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.  
City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

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Mr. J. Friend has them in his possession at the Hall in Webber Street.

### Our Open Page.

PLACARDS to the following effect are being posted in Cheltenham and Gloucester:—The inhabitants of Cheltenham and Gloucester will remember that, in 1841, Mr. Holyoake was indicted for Blasphemy, for an answer given to the question of a local preacher in the Cheltenham Mechanics' Institution. Under the title of 'The History of the Last Trial for Atheism in England,' he has now found an opportunity of publishing the personal particulars and public results of that transaction. The work contains literary portraits of Capt. Mason, governor of the gaol, and of Bransby Cooper—with anecdotes of the Rev. Robert Cooper, the chaplain, Mr. Hicks, surgeon, and the Rev. Andrew Sayer. Among the persons of Cheltenham preserved in this record are Mr. Bubb, solicitor, surgeon Pinching, Mr. Capper, the Rev. T. B. Newell, Mr. Overbury, Mr. Jelinger Symonds, with anecdotes of the Chartists, and various other parties.

Mr. Trueman, long a worker among the Free-Inquirers of Paddington, having suffered from illness for some time, a subscription was made on his account at the Hall of Science after Mr. Holyoake's lecture on Sunday evening. The John Street friends have aided in another way. W. J. B. has sent £1.

The instrumental band at the Hall of Science has been changed for a pianoforte, and vocal performances. Before and after the lectures on Sunday evening a gentleman sings selected songs, much more in taste than sacred music. The present pieces appear to give great pleasure, the words being of the progressive order of thought.

A 'Constant Reader' writes:—"You would oblige me by saying how I could send the *Reasoner* to Ireland, and what the postage would be. The regulations cited in No. 219 I find are for the United States. Will the same regulations answer for Ireland, viz., not exceeding 2 oz. one penny? If so, I will send a weekly number to a "Convert from Catholicism." I am another myself. Please oblige me through the medium of the *Reasoner* Open Page.' Perhaps some Irish reader can answer our correspondent. We fear the postage to Ireland will be twopence.

Three original letters, in the hand-writing of Sir Walter Scott, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, and Thomas Moore, author of 'Lalla Rookh,' written in 1827, have been forwarded to our office by a person in Scotland, whose necessities compel him to sell them. Any one likely to purchase them can see them by calling upon our publisher, or may learn the price by forwarding an envelope directed and stamped.

We learn that Mr. George Adams, of Cheltenham, has gone to America.

The tract with which we are favoured by Mr. Jordan—the 'Logic of Life,' by the Rev. Hugh Stowell, M.A.—was not written with any reference to the 'Logic of Death.' On the contrary, it was that tract which suggested the title of the 'Logic of Death.'

S. Moons will find every work of Voltaire worth its English price.

The German wool work, in relief landscape, illustrative of the Seasons, is at the Rosherville Gardens this season. The ingenious artists have done nature into wool in a very noticeable manner.

M. Cabet, the Icarian Communist, arrived in London last week, and has proceeded to Paris.

Mr. Hall, of Carrington Street, Nottingham, wishes to purchase a copy of Blount's Translation of Philostratius.

On Sunday evening, Mr. Holyoake lectured at the Hall of Science on 'The Policy and Prospects of Freethinking; with a report of the strength and temper of the enemy in Scotland and the North.'

# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition, is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## LECTURES IN PAISLEY.

THE first lecture in Paisley was in the Wilson Hall, held by our Socialist friends. Mr. Motherwell is still secretary, and Mr. Glassford president. There is no example among us in which a small Branch has continued its organisation and social usefulness, and grown in influence, and acquired respect, as the Paisley Branch has done. And there are pieces of their conduct as instructive as their general example. Before my engagement was completed, Mr. Motherwell wrote me—'We are ready, but we wait for Glasgow to step first. They seem to expect the position of the initiative, and we all concede it to them.' Such an excellent temper as this is rarely manifested. Where there is the ability to act thus, there is always the ability to exist, and control success.

One who was lately known as Provost Anderson, of Paisley, died on the night of my first lecture. He is spoken of as a liberal and intelligent man. He was a Quaker. In England a Quaker is a solemn thing enough, but in Scotland, that is when compared with good presbyterian saints, he is quite a lively creature—certainly a liberal one as far as freedom of conscience is concerned, and the moral use of the Sabbath. The good provost always gave his vote in favour of Sunday trains. Peace and honour be with his name. A story is told of the provost, that in his early days he was so thorough-going a radical that, about 1820, he had to ship himself to America in a meal tub. Some assured me the legend was fabulous, others that it was true, which is likely enough in those blessed days of Castlereagh Toryism. If so, the provost must have been entered among the imports of the New York Custom-house as a 'British refugee in barrel.' When, in the course of events, the radical became a provost, people wondered at the change of public opinion; and when the jealous radicals thought the good provost grew whiggish, they revived the fable of the meal barrel. Nevertheless the broad-brimmed mayor died with the real esteem of his fellow-citizens, many of whom remember with gratitude his noble conduct during a season of distress, such as Paisley has too often experienced. On such an occasion he refused to call in the military, whose presence he thought would only excite to outrage people already in despair through want. The responsibility of the peace of the town rested with him. It is difficult to conceive how much courage was required in this act. He saved many homes from widowhood and orphanhood, and many poor fellows also from miserable transportation. The blood he saved must have been a sweeter thought to him on the bed of death, than the blood others have shed can surely be to them. The tomb of such a Magistrate is nobler than that of any Soldier's.

Except the first, the lectures were given in the Exchange Rooms—the Wilson Street Hall being too small. The largest audiences I had addressed in Scotland were those of Paisley. Several took notes, but no notable person entered into debate.

The first night in the Exchange Rooms a rather elderly man came on the platform, and, applying the definite article to a most indefinite subject, demanded of me to tell him 'which was *the* church?' The querist seemed to be a cross between a Mormon and a Swedenborgian, and proved a pleasant interlocutor.

Next, a lively gentleman in a short green coat, who had the bearing of a half-pay officer in a citizen's habit, stepped solemnly and methodically on to the platform. He rejoiced in the ancient name of Adam, but he did not resemble Adam in any other respect. Fixing himself like a drill-serjeant, stiff and perpendicular, he commenced; and not till he had found his position did he seem able to speak at all. 'Did I believe in God? he wanted to know that.' And then, still standing, arms down and perpendicular as a light-house, he turned a pair of eyes—large, full tea-cup like eyes, so jetty and electrical that they seemed like a couple of black bude lights. Not since the days of Satchwell of Northampton have I seen anything half so flashy. The Exchange was large and the platform dark—so much so that I could scarcely see myself; and I must have appeared to the audience like an Esquimaux at the North Pole, in the nine months when they have no sun. But when my friend in green did his exercise of 'eyes right,' and turned his optics in my direction, he illumined the hall, and the audience resounded with surprise and merriment at this ocular pantomime. Of all the opponents I ever met, this gentleman was the most *glaring*. After a little short-sword exercise about the existence of God, he made a thrust with Chance, and closed by charging with the French Revolution. He was an 'honest-like' old 'sodger' of the Uncle Toby school, and we missed him the second night.

On returning to Paisley on the following week, I lectured, by request, on Chartism, after which an internecine discussion took place, Messrs Robinson and Cochrane being chief disputants. The subject was a vigorous mutual criticism of each others' party in the town, and preference and antipathy to Mr. O'Connor. With the general points of the lecture agreement was expressed. But with local differences and active dissent there seemed to exist a healthy feeling that promised to right itself.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### REINFORCEMENT.

THE proportion of recent numbers of the *Reasoner* written by myself attests the extent of the demands made on my attention and time, arising out of current controversies. Much, of which no notice has been given, remains behind. The *Intellectual Repository*, a monthly magazine of the Swedenborgians, contains several columns of personal interest, by the Rev. Woodville Woodman, in reference to myself and in reference to Mrs. Martin (for whom, being ill, it is our duty to answer.) In the *Lancaster Guardian* the Rev. Mr. Fleming has commenced his reply to my lectures in that town. And that my answer may be admitted in the *Guardian*, it should be prepared with such carefulness that while it explains every principle faithfully, shall yet afford no pretext for exclusion. Public lectures can, in most cases, be rendered remunerative, but not so communications to the press, which now consume my time week after week, compelling the relinquishment of almost all other engagements. We have reached that stage at which it is indispensable that our defences are presented thoughtfully. The opponents whom we have deliberately provoked have leisure, learning, acuteness, and power, and they are ready and disposed to take vigorous advantage of any deficiencies or neglect which we may betray. The clergy in many quarters now take in the *Reasoner* to see the state of the case on the side opposed to them, and effectiveness is now of import-

ance to us. Ministers take the *Reasoner* into their vestries and pulpits, and City Missionaries carry it from house to house, when they find any argument in it ill considered or ill expressed, by whomsoever written. Editorially, one will shortly have to learn of that vigilant merchant who acquired the faculty of sleeping with one eye open.

In every part of the country demands are being loudly made for fuller developments of our advocacy, especially for directions on organisation. This week appears the continuation of our reply to Professor Newman's book, a statement which, for many reasons, ought no longer to be delayed. It is intended to appear in a separate form, for special circulation. Besides the *Theological Register*, which is proceeding, and a 'Library of all Churches,' which is being formed, the reader will shortly see an announcement of a 'Cabinet of Reason,' being a series of Six-penny and Shilling Volumes of works original and revised, by which we will consent to be judged. We have no accredited literature of our own, and the Clergy take up any book, by whomsoever and howsoever written, and quote it against us as our own. We must accredit chosen works, and thus put an end to this liability of indiscriminate attack and indefinite responsibility.

The object of this notice is to say to those of our readers who think it useful that I should be able, for some time, to devote myself fully to the execution of a work to which I am in a sense pledged as a matter of honour, no less than conscientious duty, will send reinforcements to our Propagandist List, so that the surplus, after defraying the usual expenses of the publication of the *Reasoner*, may afford some salary. This is not said to the public nor to all of our readers (because many read the *Reasoner* who are not with us), but to those who approve of what is being done and desire it to proceed uninterruptedly and as efficiently as possible. The persons now addressed are solely those who see that our war against the teachings of the priesthood is a well advised and necessary system of self-defence, who see that we are engaged in the destruction of that which, if not destroyed, paralyses progress and puts dishonour upon us, while it remains strong enough to enforce conventional acquiescence in it on the part of our friends. What is here proposed is not a matter of personal necessity to myself, as my customary engagements afford that which is sufficient for my wants. It will be a wrong to me if any put upon this the construction of an 'appeal' in the usual sense. I merely wish to be able to occupy myself in a particular way. As the fight has grown thick and hot, I, without hesitation, ask for the means of fighting the battle out. If I am to be held in any way responsible as conducting a warfare, I must, like any other person so placed, be held free to ask for reinforcements when needed.

The Rev. Mr. Woodman, in the Swedenborgian magazine to which I have to reply, argues that I ought to work for nothing—but though the ability of doing so is enviable indeed, it involves consequences which I never found a butterman or a milkman able to understand, and, in the usual course of human events, it comes about that these people have to form opinions on this very subject. If Mr. Woodman happens to have any little people at his table, he has doubtless found out that they have learned to eat before reaching years of 'discretion,' and nothing that he can do will cure them of the habit. Every day they expect something, and though he explain to them that it is neither religious, disinterested, nor philosophical to eat; and though he give them very excellent reasons against it—though he speak to them, as he of Tarsus has it, 'with the tongues of men and angels,' they will cut his oration short in two by demanding 'a piece of bread and butter'—and prove all eloquence on this point, as St. Paul again assures us, so

much 'sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.' The doctrine, therefore, that Mr. Woodman could not carry out with juveniles, whose *plastic* nature is proverbial, cannot be of fair application to more unyielding adults, while the world is so much addicted to dining, beyond the power of example to check or of logic to refute. I must therefore be allowed to stipulate for the means, till 'better light' is vouchsafed of complying with the general custom. G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### AGGREGATE MEETING OF THE MORMONS IN LONDON.

A CONFERENCE of the people known as 'Mormonites,' or 'Latter-day Saints,' was held on Monday week, at the Freemasons' Tavern. Some time before three o'clock, the hour fixed for commencing, the body of the large hall and the galleries were crowded with a very respectable and orderly assembly, consisting in about an equal division of the members of both sexes, with a considerable proportion of young persons. In addition to the leaders of the 'Saints' in London and the provinces, and in Scotland and Ireland, there were also present several brethren from America, France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, and Sweden, who had come to the metropolis to visit the Exhibition. There could not, altogether, have been less than 1100 people in the hall, and nearly twice that number were refused tickets, in consequence of there not being sufficient room to accommodate them.... There were addresses from the 'elders,' in the course of which it was stated that the statistics of January last showed there were, altogether, in the United Kingdom, 42 conferences, 602 branches, 22 seventies, 12 high priests, 1,761 elders, 1,590 priests, 1,226 teachers, 682 deacons, and 25,454 members; making a total of 30,747 Saints. During the last 14 years more than 50,000 had been baptised in England, of whom 17,000 had emigrated to 'Zion.' One of the young ladies, dressed in white (perhaps the most handsome and ladylike of the number), next took her place on the platform, and delivered, in a clear and well modulated voice, an address on behalf of the young ladies, relative to the important part sustained by their sex in assisting to elevate the morals and improve the spiritual condition of the human family by the spread of the Gospel, and the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, &c. Miss Louisa Johnstone, of Birmingham, a young vocalist of considerable merit, who presided at the piano, afterwards favoured the company with a song, the first verse of which was as follows:—

I'm a saint, I'm a saint, on the rough world wide,  
 The earth is my home, and my God is my guide!  
 Up, up, with the truth, let its power bend the knee,  
 I am sent, I am sent, and salvation is free.  
 I fear not old priestcraft; its dogmas can't awe,  
 I've a chart for to steer by, that tells me the law;  
 And ne'er as a coward to falsehood I'll kneel  
 While Mormon tells truth, or God's prophets reveal!  
 Up, up, with the truth, let its power bend the knee;  
 I am sent! I am sent! dying Bab'lon to thee;  
 I am sent! I am sent! take this warning and flee.

Hymns and songs, and addresses from Lorenzo Snow, President of the Italian Mission, and Erastus Snow of the Danish Mission, followed, and the meeting did not separate until a late hour.

[We have abridged this account from the *Nonconformist* of June 11th, not having had the opportunity of being present at the meeting. It is frequently said that Christianity must be true—it spread so miraculously: that it could not be ridiculous, or it would not have met with such prompt acceptance. Here we have a body having the advantage of doctrines as ridiculous as can be desired, multiplying much more miraculously than Christianity itself. Mormonism must be true.—Ed.]



## Examination of the Press.

## THE CHRISTIANITY OF CHRIST, AND THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE CHURCHES.

—There is no moral virtue more estimable than sincerity of opinion. There is no spectacle more painful to an honest, sensitive, and truth-loving spirit, than that of a conscientious man suffering under persecution for having publicly expressed the convictions of his mind. Who can read of the horrid barbarities practised by the Popish inquisition on Protestant Christians, and not feel his blood boil with indignation? Who can read of the savage cruelties inflicted by Protestant bigotry upon Popish Christians, and not blush and sigh for the superstition, ignorance, and inconsistency of humanity? Who? do we say—alas! we fear there are many even in the nineteenth century, and in England, who would not scruple to erect again the stake at Smithfield, and with their own hands to apply the torch to the faggot-bound ‘heretic.’ There are to this day, and we grieve to write it, many highly educated (as the phrase goes) and notably-pious persons whose religious zeal would carry them on to the perpetration of atrocities towards their mis-believing fellow-creatures, which would be worthy the worst times of papal despotism. The love of persecution for the sake of religion yet glows in the hearts of thousands of professing Christians. This love is not confined to the professors of any particular set of doctrines; it is alike cherished by Protestant and Roman Catholic, by churchman and dissenter—in short by all who prefer the wild dogmas of revelation to the pure dictates of reason. From the time of ear-smiting Peter down to the present debate about ‘papal aggression,’ the history of Christianity has been little else than one unbroken succession of bloodthirsty violence, sectarian bitterness, and priestly fraud. So true is this, that it has been said that if a man were to judge of Christianity by the conduct of Christians, it is about the very last religion a good citizen would select for himself. And we are convinced more infidels have been made through the religious feuds of Christian churches, than by the teaching of the most talented sceptical authors. Seeing that Christian communities have not been more free from strife and wickedness than other states where the name of Christ was not only not adored but despised, many a man has been driven to renounce every religious faith, and to say with the French philosopher Bayle ‘I am a Protestant because I protest against *all* religions.’ The wisdom of such a course we may be permitted to call in question; but enthusiastic sensibility is frequently the victim of illogical conclusions, and we must confess to some sort of respect for the errors of the head when we find the heart uninfected with inhuman and anti-social prejudices. Now, to condemn the Christianity of Christ as laid down in the new Testament because the Christianity of the churches has sanctioned persecution and slaughter, appears to us a very considerable error of the head. And this is one point on which we think Mr. Holyoake errs. He argues that as Christians have in every age acted the part of ferocious tormentors towards those who have differed from them in religion, Christianity must necessarily be a ferocious and wicked faith. But we do not admit the sequitur. Christ never commanded persecution—he taught us to love our enemies, as Socrates had done four hundred years before. Christ did not ordain secular punishments for those who refused his doctrine—he desired the tares among the wheat to be let alone until the harvest, and not to be rooted up and burnt with fire. Christ preached ‘peace on earth,’ and we challenge Mr. Holyoake to show one occasion on which Jesus of Nazareth evinced a partiality for massacres, wars, and intole-

rance. The spirit of Christ was the spirit of gentleness and love. Indignation he doubtless often displayed against Pharisees and ceremony-worshipping Jews, but a heart earnest for the propagation of truth and the victory of right, cannot avoid the impulses of its better nature. Christ's indignation, however, never overstepped the bounds of charity. To accuse Christ of want of charity and of instigating to persecution, in consequence of what subsequent teachers and professors have done, is unjust. It is equally unjust to identify, as many do, the profession of atheism with profligacy of character and entire contempt for all moral obligations. Mr. Holyoake will admit the force of reasoning when applied to his own case—why not, then, in the case of Christianity? Neither can we agree with Mr. Holyoake in his atheistical theory. Mr. H. does not believe there is a God, because he cannot discover any trace of him in nature. To our minds nature presents so many marks of design and such evidence of a prime power somewhere existing, that unless the system of the universe arose by chance out of chaos, or existed from all eternity, there is nothing left for us to fall back upon but the being of a God—that is some spiritual, eternal, intelligent power, the first principle of all things. What the nature and attributes of this power may be we do not pretend to say. What we contend for is simply the *necessary* existence of *some* such power, call it by what name you please—Jehovah, God, Nature, or Lord. We think that the atheist asks us to credit a greater miracle than any to be found in the Christian Scriptures. But be this as it may; let the atheist's belief or no-belief be the very essence of credulity and folly, he has a right to enunciate it openly. If his views be unreasonable, those of his persecutors who would silence him by law and punish him by imprisonment for free utterance are not only unreasonable but disgraceful. The narrative of Mr. Holyoake's book sets forth in strong colours the hideous deformity of that species of modern inquisition which the law places over liberty of thought and speech. We envy not that man his feelings who can peruse this 'Last Trial by Jury for Atheism' unmoved, and without loathing for the paltry piety of his accusers. We are surprised at the cool and temperate tone in which this book is written. After the treatment Mr. Holyoake received from the 'powers that be,' we might have expected a more antagonistic production from his pen. Six months' confinement in Gloucester gaol—for merely saying in public that he thought the people too poor to have a God, and that while they were in this state it would be well to put the Deity on half-pay—instead of souring, seems to have philosophised his spirit, without converting him to the Christian faith. Mr. Holyoake was tried in August 1842, and found *guilty* of blasphemy, that vague and capricious term for an indefinable crime. The account he gives of his trial is extremely interesting. The description of his prison life it is impossible to read without emotion. While in confinement several attempts were made to convince him of the error of his creed, but were all unsuccessful. We cannot but admire the quiet yet determined manner in which Mr. Holyoake conducted himself throughout his imprisonment. He effectually baffled the soul-torturing priests who came to 'convert' him by authority, and we regard his little book as a valuable contribution to the cause of freethought.—F. G., in the *Working Man's Journal* of June 7th, 1851. [Against the remarks of this friendly reviewer, touching Christianity not warranting persecution, it is not necessary to offer a defence here. Those who read the book reviewed will find the reasons upon which the author grounds his statements, and by them he is willing to be judged.—Ed.]

## The Philosophic Type of Religion,

DEVELOPED BY PROFESSOR NEWMAN : \* STATED AND EXAMINED.

BY G. J. HOLYOAKE.

[Continued from last number.]

'THE most decisive moral effects produced by the devotional posture of the soul,' expressed by the term reverence, is explained (p. 50) to 'depend on consciousness that it has met the eye of God.' To ensure this sentiment pure, lofty, and progressive, Mr. Newman hesitates not to warn the reader that even the Bible is not to be regarded as an Ideal, unless the conscience is too dull to rise above the Bible—that in no case must the conscience be *depressed* to any standard, not even to the Biblical standard (p. 62.) Mr. Newman gives this salutary piece of instruction, by which the entire Christian world might largely profit. 'All Christian apostles and missionaries,' says he, 'like the Hebrew prophets, have always refuted Paganism by direct attacks on its *immoral* doctrines, and have appealed to the consciences of heathens as competent to decide the controversy' (p. 59.) The same boldness of simple and true faith, by which the born votary of Paganism breaks away from the errors of his national creed to follow [what he is told are] the revelations of God in his soul, will also *authorise and require* the Romanist to reject the Authority of his Church, and the Protestant that of his Bible, whenever the one or the other inculcates upon him as divine that which falls beneath the highest Ideal of his soul' (p. 57.)

If it were required of me to define this work on the Soul, in relation to that spiritual religion which is so distasteful to the world when dispensed from the pulpits by men of crude knowledge and vulgar nature, I should say this book is the 'Philosophy of Evangelical Piety.' Mr. Newman throws a new light on Sin—a subject so treated that no new light was deemed possible; so badly treated, indeed, that no new light was felt to be wanted. When it comes to be distinctly perceived that the God of Nature is the God of our consciences, and that all *wrong* doing is frowned on by Him, the two new terms, Holiness and Sin, are needed (p. 65.) To perceive, as even old Herodotus did, that the Gods hate and

punish the desire of sin, as itself a sin, is the germ of all spirituality (p. 66.) We get more light than comes from many sermons in a single definition; as that of Remorse, for instance, which is explained as the convulsion of the Soul, as it consciously stands under the eye of God (p. 69.)

The purposes of religion; the condition of its purity and test of its perfection, are thus described—'The moral uses of religion are to enliven man's conscience, strengthen his will, elevate his aspirations, content him with small supplies to his lower wants, rouse all his generous tendencies, and hereby ennoble him altogether; but it can do none of these things effectually, except when it keeps him steadily looking into the face of the Infinite and Infinitely Pure One' (p. 70.) *Guileness* is the whole secret of divine peace (p. 74.) A conscious uprightness is obviously necessary to any spiritual peace, nor does the heart need any other testimony than its own to the fact of its uprightness (p. 89.)

With a reflection as searching as his piety is pure, Mr. Newman points out that what is popularly termed 'the total depravity of human nature' is more correctly the imperfection of nature. In order to be morally *perfect* we should need at once infinite wisdom and affections of infinite power—in fine, we should need the incommunicable prerogatives of God (p. 84.) The necessary imperfection of our constitution cannot be appropriated to us as Sin. This rational sense of sin does not, however, degenerate into contentment with imperfection, for the Soul is taught to aspire daily to higher and higher Perfection. To distinguish between the testimony of a *Good Conscience* and the dangerous complacency of Self-righteousness, Mr. Newman observes, that 'the moment we begin to admire ourselves, we are satisfied with the state of goodness already attained, and cease (for so long) to aspire after anything higher: thus the life-blood of the soul is arrested, and putrefying stagnation is to be feared' (p. 92.)

In treating of the sense of Personal Relation to God, Mr. Newman no longer appeals to reason within

\* 'The Soul, her Sorrows and her Aspirations.' By Francis William Newman. London: John Chapman.

the same degree as in the preceding portions of his work. We therefore take his descriptions of this phenomenon. 'The man,' says he, 'who at the same moment that he adores perceives that his adoration is perceived and is accepted, has already begun an intercourse with God' (p. 123.) Mr. Newman's theory is however consistent with itself in all attractiveness of worship. He tells us that 'God does not act towards us (spiritually) by generalisations, which may omit our individual case—his perfection consists in dealing with each case by itself as if there were no other' (p. 126.)

Spiritual progress Mr. Newman holds to consist, not merely in suppressing some worse and lower tendency very necessary and desirable, but a comfortable mediocrity is all that will result. The moral perceptions must keep rising (p. 169)—the better part which we choose must keep elevating (p. 168.)

Mr. Newman's views of a Future life are as new, modest, and pure as his other speculations. He considers that there are no arguments either in Scripture or of Reason appreciable by the unspiritual consciousness proving the immortality of the soul. Future existence seems not to him necessary, either to soften sorrow or animate hope. Pure love to God simply requires that nearness of spirit which is obedience and purity. Trustful aspiration seems to be the condition of the soul with respect to eternity—and whatever assurance can be had of everlasting life comes best from the spiritual conviction that from being a child of God we shall be *heirs* of God—of his kingdom, the kingdom of the Prophets and the Messiah.

On the Sermon on the Sabbath, and other 'Means of Grace,' especially on the Sabbath, Mr. Newman produces one of the most original and effective passages which has yet been written. These are parts of the book the public will suppose most congenial to us, but we have no intention to dwell upon them—we deem them rather belonging to the religious who may profit by such a piquant analysis of their unsuspected errors. We indeed admire the modest and reverent bravery with which the whole book is conducted from beginning to end. All the efforts of mankind to explain the mystery of spiritual things are treated with respect; and yet none are exempt from that manly criticism which comes so gracefully from the brother of the great Puseyite leader. We have chosen rather to dwell on those affirmative developments which are additions to our

insight into religious phenomena. We therefore conclude this imperfect exposition by a final passage, which must command the respect of philosophy, as he gives us his key to the True Religion. 'The immense progress of pure intellect,' says he, 'must show every thoughtful man the impossibility (not to say wickedness) of sacrificing the Intellect to the Soul; and wherever there is true Faith, there is an unheating conviction that there cannot possibly be any real collision between these two parts of human nature' (p. 180.) 'To sacrifice Imagination and Intellect, and to sacrifice Domestic affection, are about on a par. It seems to be quite an axiom of thought that the human mind was meant to labour for the Useful, to contemplate the Beautiful, to possess itself of the True, and to contend for the Right, as well as to worship the Holy, or imitate the Bountiful One (p. 190.)

He who attempts to render the work of another should, as far as possible, render it in the spirit in which it is written. This I have endeavoured to do, placing myself, as well as I was able, in the author's place, endeavouring to think his thoughts, and to forget that my own views differed from his. If I have done justice to my own estimate of Mr. Newman's book, the reader will agree with me that it approaches to the solution of that famous question put in 'Childe Harold'—

Foul Superstition! howso'er disguised,  
Idol, saint, virgin; prophet, crescent, cross,  
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,  
Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss!  
*Who* from true worship's gold can separate  
thy dross?

The author of the 'Soul, her Sorrows and her Aspirations,' has higher pretensions to have answered this question than any other writer of our times.

Religious persons have often replied to me, 'You will find the same genial utterances of piety in the writings of many divines as in Mr. Newman's.' In one sense this is true; there are passages of generous inspiration in the works of many eminent preachers, but expressed with less explicitness, and besides, accompanied with a certain equivocation which leaves you in doubt whether you may trust them. With Mr. Newman there is an unmistakableness which you feel to be at once reliable. There are no subtle texts of Scripture coming in to dilute his meaning—there are no theories of divinity crushing the vitality out of his generous sayings. What he says once he

says *all through*—not in one or two passages, but on every page. His speech is *constantly* gentle—his pure views extend to his life—they pervade all he does—he sweeps away all that contradicts his genial utterances. It is in this *wholeness*, this *permanence* of spirit, that makes him unlike all other Christian writers.

#### PART II. THE EXAMINATION.

The advantage of a book of this character to all who desire the rationalisation of religion is incalculable. It constitutes a standard by which to try the low types of the Christian faith. To one who dissents from pure Moralism—to any indeed who hold the popular and degrading forms of Christianity, we may point to the teachings of this book, and thus hope to elevate them. To ourselves it has the great value of showing us the ablest things that can be urged by a man of candour and genius, and in what is excellent in such delineation we see what we have to equal or surpass, if we are compelled to reject that set forth by our opponent. A book so consummate as the *Natural History of the Soul*, is a standard, therefore, by which to try others and ourselves.

This is not a hard book to answer from our point of sight—the difficulty is in refuting such argumentative foundation as it has without giving the impression that we undervalue its fine moral developments.

Mr. Newman sees in the Soul and the Conscience specific senses. But the recurrence to us in act of our common ideal of justice or duty is all that we mean when we speak of Conscience. The frequent query to the unjust, or supine man—'have you no conscience?' means, have you no sense of justice or duty? We have seen the Soul defined as 'that part of our nature by which we are in contact with the Infinite'—But the Soul, like the conscience, admits of a simple explanation. From the observation of the near we pass to the contemplation of extended phenomena. The illimitableness of the unknown has a refining influence over us. Doubtless we desire to discover our relation, if any, to it. The sense of the Infinitude around us is an extension or enlargement of our Consciousness. We give it the name of Soul, but we hardly mean thereby an entity. We may recur to reflections on nature, and thus amplify our own life without making that part of our nature an independent existence. To refer each class of functions to separate moral senses is convenient and distinctive, but we must beware of allowing these terms to grow into entities by this

specious and frequent use. From speaking of infinite phenomena we come to abridge it into the Infinite, the unknown parts of nature come to be spoken of by Goethe as the Unknown. The Infinite and the Unknown, by the agency of isolation and capital letters, assume the force of personalities, and the attribute insensibly glides into an Entity. It appears to me that the logical force of this book upon believers lies in the unnoticed metamorphoses which such leading words undergo.

The atheist sees also with Mr. Newman, that all human knowledge is bounded; and he, too, seeks to draw the line where our knowledge ends and our conjectures begin: but the 'illimitable haziness' surrounding our existence, of which he also is sensible, fails to enable him to draw up a confession of religious belief—it indeed excites his 'imagination,' but fails to guide his 'understanding.' The 'region of dimness is not without relation to his moral state,' so far as we can judge the reasons alleged.

The Infinite is open to us as well as to the theist, and therefore the 'generous side' of the nature of the moralist may be nurtured and expanded by its contemplation. Every aspect of nature has its lesson for reflective man. The boundlessness of the starry region impresses us with the littleness of all strife. In the presence of such immensity we are taught humility and love. We cannot look on Nature *at Peace* without inspiring gentleness and tranquility. The same forms of moral loveliness our author delineates with a master's hand, seen equally discernible and equally to belong to the student of nature.

Mr. Newman unites a Catholic explicitness to Evangelical doctrine—with him we have none of the evasiveness of the usual rational religionists. Mr. Newman does not pretend to *compete* with logic. He is too much of the scholar to deprecate it. He concedes its great claims as the security of intelligence, but he erects a system independently of it, openly, respectfully, but boldly without it.

The affections of Awe, Wonder, Admiration, do not denote any necessary belief in a Personal Deity (p. 49.) Order, Design, Goodness, and Wisdom are the attributes of nature which are held to bring in a personal Deity. But with respect to Order in the universe, we do not learn from any observation that it must necessarily have an *external* origin. Mr. Newman does not seem to discover in nature proof that it has a Ruler over it. He says that if a man believes that in the human mind an origi-

nating Will exists, he will believe that the same species of Will has been exercised on nature. But if he discerns within himself no first principle of movement, he of course needs none out of himself. If in his own actions he sees no marks of (what others call) Will, why should he see them in Nature? (pp. 29.30.) This is precisely the case with the atheist. That law (which is the name given to the uniformity of operations, to the calculable forces of nature) seems to him also to pervade mind. Intelligence seems no more exempt from law than inorganic matter. Will is merely the coincidence of desire, intellectual or sensuous, with external influence.

The atheist therefore has little to answer: his case remains intact. He knows that no opinion will finally prevail but that which is founded on or coincident with logic. With respect to the argument of Design, Mr. Newman fails to establish any case which affects the position of the atheist. The line of reasoning adopted by Paley, followed by Chalmers, and illustrated by Brougham, Mr. Newman gives up as untenable, and proposes a new statement of it. Thus:—

‘To believe in a divine architect, because I cannot *otherwise* understand by what train of causation an Eye could have been made, is one thing: does the theist any the more comprehend? But to believe in a Design, *because* I see the Eye to be suited to the Light, is another thing. This latter view rests on the intuitive perceptions of the Soul; the former on the accuracy of strict logical deduction—which can easily be shown to be inconclusive. Such Fittnesses as meet our view on all sides bring a reasonable conviction that Design lies beneath them; and to confess, is to confess the doctrine of an *intelligent* Creator’ (p. 34.)

But this goes no farther than to furnish a superficial, popular justification of the ascription of mind and personality to the power which is in Nature. But to what end do we trouble at all about this matter unless to get intellectual satisfaction out of it? and this Mr. Newman’s argument does not afford us. He himself says it does not carry us up to a First Cause.\* Then how

\* A celebrated divine of the Church of England, some time ago, favoured me with an answer to my ‘Logic of Death,’ founded upon a masterly restatement of the design argument. As he marked his letter ‘private,’

can we rely on that course of reasoning which brings with it no test of its authenticity? How can we know that the road we have set out upon is the right one, if it be a road that cannot bring us to the end of our journey? In a passage of memorable candour, Mr. Newman only alleges that ‘it is injustice—to the train of thought—which suggests Design to represent it as a *search after causes* until we come to a *First Cause*, and there stop.’

But if this be not its purpose, of what value is it? Mr. Newman continues—

‘As an argument this, I confess, in itself brings me no satisfaction. It is not pretended that we understand the First Cause any more than the original phenomena. When we know not the character of His agency, how have we *accounted* for anything? or how have we even simplified the problem? A *God* uncaused and existing from eternity is to the full as incomprehensible as a world uncaused and existing from eternity’ (p. 36.)

It would not be possible to express more forcibly the difficulties which the atheist seeks to clear up. Yet upon these Mr. Newman has and professes to have no light to throw. If, therefore, we regard the position of the atheist logically as it should be regarded, as arising in an attempt to satisfy the human understanding respecting the fundamentals of Theology, Mr. Newman gives up the whole case to him.

‘It is right however here,’ he observes, ‘to enter a protest against being thought to have any accurate and scientific knowledge of God. *We have none*. Our knowledge is essentially crude, and only *approximate*; and to affect the rigour of human science is mere delusion.’

Mr. Newman’s entire arguments on this head are founded on a total logical negation—written without the fear of the philosophers before the eyes of the author, and most certainly sufficiently in defiance of them. Thus we find ‘Syllogistic proof of an outer world will never be gained, nor yet syllogistic proof that a God exists or listens to prayer’ (p. 92.) And we ‘can no more *prove* that Will is not mere Desire, than I can prove that it is God’s influence and not my own which I feel within.’

and has declined, at my request, to remove the restriction, I have been unable to publish it. But these passages are equally a reply to it.

(To be continued.)

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## DECLINE OF QUAKERISM.

To the Editor of the Reasoner.

SIR,—It is an opinion held by many of the orthodox among the Society of Friends, that their religious principles will ultimately prevail, and that all the world will become Quakers. That Society never makes any returns of the members, but the estimate for many years has been 20,000. The government census details for Sunday, March 31st, 1851, show that not more than 13,400 persons attended public worship at the Friends' meeting houses in England, Wales, and Scotland, on the morning of that day, so that allowing for absentees, invalids, and young children, and for the presence of a few non-members, it is probable that the Quaker population does not exceed 15,000, which is 5,000 below the usual estimate. In the last yearly meeting (Congress) of the Society, held in London, May 1851, John Bright, M.P., spoke impressively on the state of the Society, and expressed his belief that in fifty years there would not be friends enough to form a yearly meeting. A member, well versed in the Society's statistics, stated, in the yearly meeting of 1850, that from the proportion of the sexes known in some of the largest meetings, it appeared that there were in the society about eleven females to seven males. We have here a society of men, acknowledged to stand high for their morality, wealth, philanthropy, industry, and general intelligence, and yet with all these essentials towards becoming great and numerous, there is a manifest dwindling in numbers, and an unsatisfactory sexual disproportion. The cause of the latter may perhaps be found in the fact, that Quakers forbid, under pain of excommunication, marriage with any but the members of their own body, and that the men choose a good wife upon other principles than those of religion. The number of persons expelled and resigning membership yearly, is very considerable; and both these are by far most frequent among the male sex; those admitted as new members from conviction are very few indeed. The hollowness that pervades Christian sects is nowhere more evident than in the Society of Friends, and well known to many of its members; a firm faith in the essential goodness of human nature, rather than its depravity, as professed, a practical belief in the value and importance of morality, and a knowledge that the outside shams of religion may be kept up, without saying much about them, will probably ensure the existence of Quakerism some years longer; but when the day arrives that every man may as fearlessly express his religious opinions as his scientific belief, the past will be regarded with astonishment, and the mummeries that we have united in upholding by a dumb show will be tried by Rationalism, and assigned a place only in the history of the things that were. Thus much from one who has the means of knowing the truth.

Q. Q.

## ON THE WORD ATHEIST.

SIR,—I think I have occasionally noticed trains of reasoning and forms of expression in the *Reasoner*, showing that you ought to adopt a different symbol of your views than the word atheist—taking that to import 'there is no God,' which you cannot affirm of your own knowledge, unless you have higher gifts than others, or it has been revealed unto you.

Cannot you find a term that will truly mark the distinction between deism and that corrected view which—if I rightly infer the state of your mind—would now limit your affirmation to this, that you do not see sufficient evidence of the existence of God?

What's in a name? Much, in theology—men must label their faith that it may be conveniently referred to; it is therefore important to truthful and just dealing with their thoughts, that the word used should correctly signify the views entertained.

Put this into the waste basket, or print it, as you please, but think of the subject, and whether the word '*Secularist*' would not convey a more correct idea of your phase of faith than '*Atheist*'!

June 1851.

EDWARD SEARCH.

[In the lecture once promised to be reported, on the '*Martinean and Atkinson Letters*,' which, however, provincial duties compelled the omission of, the applicability to us of the word *Secularist* was dwelt upon—and the sense in which *Secularism* is peculiarly the work we have always had in hand, and how it is larger than *Atheism*, and includes it, was explained. In the '*Case stated between Atheism and Theism*,' the subject of an essay in preparation, Mr. Holyoake will enter into the question.—ED.]

#### SUN WORSHIP.

SIR,—The Tracts in Nos. 1 and 2, Vol. XI., show that the Hebrew religion is derived from the Egyptian—can the writer show the origin of the Egyptian? Have not all religions their origin in *sun worship*? consequently are sun worship still, though the worshippers may be ignorant of it. The fact is that Jesus Christ is the man in the sun, and I am not certain that Moses was not when his face shone so that the people could not look on it.

N. S.

We take the following curious letter from the *Nation* of June 7th. It is addressed to the editor of that paper:—

Sir,—In the article on this subject, by an Irish antiquary, in your last publication; it is stated that the pagans worshipped in '*groves*,' which, no doubt, they did; the groves, like other interesting places, having their tutelary deities. But the '*grove*' of the scriptures, as quoted, is certainly not a grove of trees, but an object within the temple, and of such a character that the Jews associated with it ideas of obscenity, as will easily appear from the following, among other texts:—'*They have made to themselves groves to provoke the Lord.*'—Douay Bible, 3 Kings. xiv., 15. If a grove of trees were meant, the expression would be, '*they have planted, &c.*' but it was something *made* or fabricated.

'*They built themselves groves on every high hill, and under every green tree.*'—Ib., xxiii., 2. How could they make '*groves*' under '*green trees*'?

'*And he took the effeminate out of the land, and removed all the filth of the idols—moreover, he removed his mother Macha from being the princess in the sacrifices of Priapus and in the grove which she had consecrated to him.*'—Ib., xv., 13. The following text is decisive:—'*He caused the grove to be carried out from the house of the Lord, and burned it at the brook Cedron, and reduced it to dust! he also destroyed the pavilions of the effeminate, for which the women wove, as it were, little dwellings for the grove.*'—4 Kings, xxiii., 9, 7.



Here it is manifest that the 'grove' was an image within the temple, and that the women wrought little dwellings or shrines for it. The Hebrew word translated 'grove' in our Bibles is *ashra*, and that does not mean a grove of trees. It was probably a small portable wooden round tower, intended to represent a *phallus*, a prominent object in the depraved theology of the Phœnicians and Greeks.

Cork, June 2, 1851.

C.

## FREEDOM OF OPINION IN WHITEHAVEN.

WE read in the *Whitehaven Herald*, of June 7th, that on Thursday, June 5, 'Before George Harrison and John Peile, Esqrs., and the Rev. F. W. Wicks, Charles Flinn, miner, was charged with beating James Hughan, a street lecturer, and with knocking him down in Strand Street. This assault, and the manner in which it originated, has been the subject of no little discussion and excitement amongst the working classes during the past week. It appeared that the complainant Hughan, who in religious profession is a Unitarian, gave a lecture "On Progression," at the end of the Bulwark on Monday evening last, when he was surrounded by groups of idlers, who seemed disposed to make merry with the lecture. Having made use of certain derogatory expressions respecting the divinity of the Founder of Christianity, he was presently handed down from the pile of timber logs from which he was addressing the crowd, and subjected to not very ceremonious treatment. Some of his friends took his part, and wished to obtain a hearing for him, which others resisted, and the affair speedily assumed the aspect of a general row, and had at one time a very alarming appearance, there being, it is calculated, not less than a thousand people present. During this disturbance it was that, according to complainant's charge, Flinn and some others struck and knocked him down. Flinn denied the charge, and said the complainant was not fit to take an oath, as he did not believe in the Bible: he said the row was a general one, and that he was knocked down himself, and if the complainant had been knocked down by him it had been accidentally. Two witnesses were called to prove that the lecturer was ill-used by Flinn; but the magistrates considered that complainant himself had been greatly to blame by inciting to a breach of the public peace. The Superintendent of Police said that unless the magistrates put a stop to these discussions on the Bulwark, some one would be murdered: he had sent a number of men down on the occasion, and they had enough to do to protect the complainant, as there was a mob at the time of at least eight or ten hundred people. The magistrates told the complainant that his conduct had been highly culpable, and therefore they should dismiss the case, which they did, and requested the Superintendent of Police to put a stop to such proceedings in future.'

If we are rightly informed Mr. Flinn has been twice in prison for assaults—dangerous assaults—and is, therefore, a person to whom public encouragement, of his peculiar line of exertion, should not be extended without some clear reason being shown. Mr. Flinn being a Catholic, is likely to take offence at that which another species of Christian would not, and this ought to be borne in remembrance before the public agree with the magistrate, that Mr. Hughan's 'conduct was highly culpable.' We have thought that one of the objects of law was to prevent men (whether provoked or not) from attempting assaults at caprice, and

executing their own judgments under the excitement of passion and prejudice. To this end reference is provided to the magistrate, in whose impartiality and justice protection may be found. But here, although we have the Rev. F. W. Wicks upon the bench, the magistrates agree to set aside the evidence of two witnesses, who testify to Flinn's assault, on the ground that Mr. Hughan had incited a breach of the peace. This is strange law. Why, if Mr. Hughan had 'incited,' it might have mitigated the sentence, but it could not prevent Flinn's conviction, unless the town of Whitehaven is to be abandoned to lynch law, or, to what seems the same—Flinn law. Is the public speaker to consult every man present, from the Catholic downwards, what he shall say before he speaks? If not, why do the magistrates attach the blame to Hughan, and acquit Flinn? Instead of this bench lending the protection of the law to those whose lives are endangered, we shall not be surprised one day at finding the bench imprisoning a man because he has had the misfortune to be assaulted, for it seems that the assaulted, and not the assaulter, is the only 'party greatly to blame,' or 'highly culpable.' A letter appears in the *Whitehaven Herald*, of June 14, the purpose of which is to show that the conscience of the infidel being different from that of the Christian, *is not to be respected*. If our friends in Whitehaven can so arrange it, I shall endeavour to go down and explain this matter, and see also whether, by a memorial to the magistrates for a re-hearing of the case (*Hughan v. Flinn*), or by memorial to the Home Secretary, some new decision cannot be had.

G. J. H.

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#### EMENDATIONS OF THE 'LOGIC OF DEATH.'

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WE have just issued the Eighteenth Thousand of this essay. Indebted to our readers for attention in circulating, fresh efforts have been made to render it acceptable and reliable. It has been printed in new type, and on better paper. The new type, besides being clearer, affords somewhat more space, which has been occupied by a needful amplification of one argument, in the second part. The paragraph on p. 15, beginning in the sixteenth edition 'The greatest aphorism,' etc., now stands thus:—

'The greatest aphorism ascribed to Christ, called his Golden Rule, tells us that we should do unto others as we would others should do unto us. It is not moral audacity, but a logical and legitimate application of this maxim to say that if men shall eventually stand before the bar of God, God will not pronounce upon any that appalling sentence, "Cast them into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" because this will not be doing to others as he, in the same situation, would wish to be done unto himself. If frail man is to "do good to them that hate him," God, who is said to be also Love, will surely not *burn* those who, in their misfortune and blindness, have erred against him. He who is above us all in power will be also above us all in magnanimity.'

Profiting by criticism, to which it has been subjected, every page has been revised where a sentence appeared that could be punctuated for the better; freed from any ambiguity, or rendered with more strength and exactness. It is now in a permanent form, and any who care to preserve it will find the new edition the best.

G. J. H.



## Our Open Page.

A CORRESPONDENT, who does not favour us with his name or address, sends a letter in which he says—'From curiosity I purchased one day a number of your periodical, and have since read several. The effect has been that I am more firmly imbued with Christian principles than ever—your irrational publication has really strengthened my faith. Cease writing, I conjure you, if you wish to preserve infidelity on earth. Write as much as you like, if you feel desirous of spreading Christianity.' As this gentleman doubtless believes what he himself says, we shall expect from him a handsome subscription to the *Reasoner* Fund. As a consistent Christian, he can hardly refuse his support to one who so 'strengthens the faith.'

A correspondent in Accrington writes:—'All my friends interested in the *Reasoner* have left the town, but strangers who have come to the town more than fill their places. Much depends on agents and booksellers. If booksellers expose the *Reasoner* for sale, it gives encouragement to the timid who wish to read it, but dare not. Many meetings have been held by those interested in Sunday schools, to find out the cause of more than three-fourths of the young men leaving the school. It is difficult to keep a *first* class—called the young men's class. Our Mechanics' Institution goes on well—there is a good attendance of young men. At one of the meetings of the members of the Institution, the defective system of Sunday school teaching was pointed out—three-fourths of the young men being absent—and provisions were made to enable young men to attend the Institution on Sunday evenings from 5 to 10 o'clock, for the purpose of reading the newspapers, monthlies, and books from the library. The attendance on Sunday evening is very good.'

Mr. Watson is at present in Cumberland, where it is hoped the change of air will fully re-establish his health.

Mr. Martin manifests signs of restoration to health. Mrs. Martin, we are very glad to report, begins to present hopes of recovery.

The New Monthly Wrapper appears with the Monthly Parts this day.

The tracts on 'Church Authority' and 'Christian Missions,' published by Israel Holdsworth, will, if opportunity offers, be quoted in part or whole.

J. W. C. wishes to see an essay on the 'Art and Details of Progress.' In some of the papers in course of publication in the *Reasoner* he will meet with something of the kind.

'At the last meeting of the town-council,' says the *Reading Mercury*, 'Mr. James complained of the high charge of £2. 5s. for the crier's hat. He also wished to take that opportunity of saying that the crier ought not, at the end of each cry, to say "God save the Queen." It was very improper.—The Mayor: Say!—Mr. James: "God save the Queen." (A laugh).—The late Mayor: I always say "Amen" when I hear him. (Laughter).—Mr. James: It ought not be suffered. It is blasphemy.'

Under the head of 'A Decided Dissenter,' the *Nonconformist*, of June 11th, quoted that—'A poor woman who attended a Dissenting chapel not far from Wiveliscombe, was continually teased by the parish priest to attend the "*True Church*.' In the warmth of her attachment to her scriptural worship, and to rid herself of the annoyance, she exclaimed, "Sir, if you put me on that church tower, and starve me to death, I'd still go to meeting!"'

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## THE LECTURES IN GLASGOW.

THE first three of the Glasgow lectures were delivered in the Unitarian Chapel, Union Street—the chapel in which the Rev. George Harris long officiated. At the members' meetings at which my admission to the occupancy of the pulpit was discussed, the votes, I was informed, were equal, and that the casting vote which decided the question in my favour was given by the chairman, the Rev. Charles Clarke. I have often had to acknowledge the courtesy and friendliness of the Unitarian Christians; but this is the most remarkable instance that I have yet met with. Though the arguments such persons may use may not win our conviction, their conduct cannot fail to command our respect.

The lectures in the chapel were upon Chartist Leaders, Science of Socialism, and Secular Education. No one can say there is no opposition to be had in Glasgow—there is one man who opposes everybody and everything. I suppose there is some one of this vocation in most Scotch towns: I heard of one in Dundee who opposes everybody, and himself too, as he sometimes disproves his own case, with a view, as he says, to be impartial. Mr. Adams, of Glasgow, is a Chartist and something more; but what that something is, is very undefined, and though Adams is always trying to define it he never does. Perhaps he is a Swedenborgian—perhaps a Gnostic, but the only thing of which you are sure is, that he will be your opponent. All things are proverbially uncertain but one, at least in Glasgow. The 'Old Guards' of Nottingham's great commander might storm Gorbals—steam vessels might sail pleasure trips on a Lord's day in Caledonia—the Tide might refuse to come up the Clyde on a Sunday out of respect to the Sabbath—there is no knowing what may happen; but one thing always happens, and that is an opposition speech from friend Adams. Yet Adams is an honest fellow, and capable of making a useful speech; but he makes himself so common that he destroys his own influence, and the people look upon him as a man to be endured, when with more judgment he would be esteemed. If he would take sides clearly, and moderately advocate one set of views, he would be a useful and even an effective man.

What he said on this occasion was not very striking. He can do better. On one night he wanted to know whether if women were not property they would not be every man's mistress? I had been saying that the time would come when it would be thought more disreputable that women should be held as property than it was now thought disreputable that the negroes should be held as property by American slaveholders. But when women were no longer man's property, Adams could not see that they would be their own property, and that independence once accomplished, the refinement and purity of a woman's nature would always keep her from pollution. A coarse or sensual man could not look up in the presence of a woman of a cultivated and pure nature. A glance of such a woman's eye is



thought intentionally offensive to the preachers and congregations noticed. The book has, also, the distasteful quality of fulsomeness. Many of the clergy mentioned must feel mortification at it; but they have not, so far as I can learn, made any objection to the book. Dryden, when he wished to mark the descent of poetry, began with Spenser and ended with Flecko: in the same way, the descent of clerical pen portraiture may be indicated, by beginning with Gilfillan and ending with the author of this book—who may be described as a very bad Gilfillan. These ‘Sketches,’ by the way, are dedicated to ‘Susanna,’ by the ‘Author of the Life of Chatterton.’ As we have not the honour of knowing the author’s name, we shall, on quoting from his performance, specify it as ‘Partridge and Oakey’s English Preachers.’ The extracts we shall quote are such as contain anecdotes which may interest those readers who may like to learn something personally of men, upon whose writings we have often to comment. The peculiarities of manner and opinion described in this work we suppose are reliable, as Partridge and Oakey, being religious publishers, have no doubt satisfied themselves that they do not libel their patrons. The pruned selections we may present, will also be made from parts which are best expressed, as respects taste and style, and from which we shall omit all we can which there may be reason to think the divines themselves would omit, were they dictating the quotations.—ED.]

The Scotch Church, Crown Court, Drury Lane, is a large oblong building; a gallery deep and commodious running round one of the long and two of the short sides—the pulpit being placed in the centre of the other long side. The only national emblems to be seen are thistle-shaped ground glass shades of the gas-lights, and a thistle or two in the painted glass windows. In all other respects the place resembles an English dissenting chapel.

How densely the church is crowded—and how aristocratic appears the congregation! We are prepared for the ‘quality,’ by the glimpse we just now had outside of luxurious-looking carriages, with strawberry-leaved coronets on their panels.

Near the pulpit, on its left side, and in a secluded place under the gallery, sits a gentleman and lady with two little children. The gentleman is of diminutive stature—his head is large, and thinly covered with dark brown hair, which carelessly sweeps across his capacious forehead. His eyes are keen and cold, the nose longish and slightly turned up at its point, the mouth thin-lipped and compressed. Two apologies for whiskers appear just below the prominent cheek bones. As a whole, the countenance is indicative of intellectual acquirements, but it wants energy of expression, or rather the expression of energy. There is something of insignificance about it. But its owner is no insignificant personage—for the little man who sits so quietly in that shaded pew, is the Prime Minister of England—Lord John Russell, and those who sit beside him are his wife and children.

Not far from the Premier is to be observed a gentleman, tall and robust-looking. His face is florid and plump. He resembles a well-to-do country gentleman, rather than a member of the titled aristocracy. Nevertheless he is a Lord. It is Lord Ducie, an amiable nobleman enough, we believe, but who is not likely to rival Brougham. He is a regular attendant on Dr. Cumming’s ministry.

‘Beautiful exceedingly’ is the singing at the Scotch Church. There is no organ; but it is evident that the choir requires not the aid of that king of musical instruments. Never have we heard better congregational singing than at Dr. Cumming’s. Clear and distinct in its silvery sweetness was one female voice, which reminded us of that of Jenny Lind: and, we have since heard that the lady

to whom it belongs is generally known as the Nightingale of Crown Court Church. The psalm of praise and thankfulness has ceased—the congregation are seated, and the minister of the place ascends the stairs which lead to the pulpit.

The prayer commences. It is an extemporaneous one, and, as all prayers should be, it is deeply fervent and devotional. We have, before now, been absolutely disgusted with some exercises of this kind; for there are ministers whom we could name who have a vile habit of talking *at* God, instead of praying *to* him. They exhibit a familiarity when addressing the Deity which painfully affects many who hear them. John Foster, one of the profoundest thinkers of the age, pointedly refers to this practice, and severely reprobates it in his Essay 'On the Aversion of men of taste to Evangelical Religion.' Dr. Cumming's prayer was a model of its kind; there were no tiresome repetitions—no daring approaches to the Divine presence—no presumptuous requests. All was solemnity, humility, and devotion; and the fervent aspirations of the Creature to its Creator.

The prayer is ended. Another hymn has been sung, and the preacher rises to commence his discourse. He is of the middle height, perhaps rather above it, but attired as he is in clerical robes, one is apt to be deceived in such a matter, which, after all, is not of any great importance, if we agree with Dr. Watts that the 'mind is the standard of the man.' Dr. Cumming's face is a fine one. A glance at it might convince any ordinary observer that it belongs to one whose mind is not of the common stamp. Look at that high, broad forehead, across which dark, very dark hair sweeps, revealing the ample temples, and behind that barrier of bone you will feel assured is a brain of uncommon capacity. Two eyebrows, large, well-arched, and black, overshadow a pair of dark eyes, of a serious and fearless expression. The nose is slightly aquiline—but not large, and on it perpetually rests a pair of spectacles, from which we may infer that much study has somewhat impaired his visual organs, however much it may have sharpened his critical perceptions. Some one has said, and I think with truth, that the mouth is a far more expressive feature than the eyes. In Dr. Cumming's case such is the fact: the upper lip is thin, but well shaped, the lower one somewhat fuller than its fellow. This feature is very expressive; at times a half-smile plays upon and around it, but it generally has a tinge of melancholy about it. The complexion of the countenance is dark, and large black whiskers from the lateral boundaries of the face. Such is the personal appearance, so far as we can convey an idea of it, of the Pastor of the Crown Court Scotch Church.

Opening a little Bible which he holds with both hands, Dr. Cumming commences his discourse, by reading from it his text. Very clear and musical is his voice. Although by no means loud, it can be heard with the utmost distinctness in the most distant part of the church, and consequently, as there is no shuffling and leaning forward to catch the sounds, the most perfect stillness reigns. Without a single preliminary 'hem,' or a moment's pause for the purpose of collecting his ideas, he at once commences the elucidation of his theme; and before he has uttered half a dozen sentences, it is evident enough that all his matter has been carefully arranged beforehand. There is not the slightest hesitation, his words and ideas flow forth like a clear continuous stream, and they are as transparent too. The eloquence of some ministers resembles the course of a mountain torrent—now with difficulty threading narrow ravines—now expanding in a calm, lake-like expanse, reflecting the loveliness of the skies—anon rushing and roaring over precipices and rocky barriers; and dancing in sunlight through verdurous plains, and mossy-winding ways. Such orators startle by similes, attract by antitheses, and charm



by variety. Not such is the character of Dr. Cumming's oratory. From the moment he commences his discourse, until the concluding sentence passes his lips, the current of his eloquence flows on calmly and untroubled. There are no passionate out-bursts—no succeeding passages of pathos—little to dazzle—less to startle—nothing to bewilder;—all is clear, calm, and convincing. With his little Bible in his hand, or more frequently in both hands, as we before intimated, he generally commences by plunging at once into his subject, not by making any lengthened introductory remarks. His voice, which but slightly informs us of his northern origin, is remarkably pleasant, and indeed musical. Seldom does it rise or sink above or below the key in which he commences his discourse, yet, as might be expected by strangers, the effect is not monotonous, for every sentence is admirably balanced, each period carefully rounded, and almost every tone is admirably modulated. When hearing Dr. Cumming, one is reminded of the description of 'Silver-tongued Smith,' one of the celebrated preachers of Elizabeth's time. But though the subject of our sketch is truly 'silver-tongued,' the solemnity, at times almost the severity of his manner preserves him from anything like tameness. Dr. Cumming's manner in the pulpit is pleasing. He seldom uses any other action than a gentle waving of the hand, or the turning from one part of his congregation to the other. He is no cushion-thumper, and depends for effect more upon what he says, than on the graces of action. Not that he is ungraceful at all—far from that; what we mean is, that he is in this respect directly the opposite of those pulpit-fops who flourish their bordered pieces of inspiration-lawn in the pulpit, and throw themselves in such attitudes, as compels one to believe that the looking glass is almost as essential a preparation for the pulpit as the Bible itself.

Dr. Cumming is a very voluminous author. His style as a writer resembles that of his oral productions. The sale of his works is productive of large sums; so that, what with the salary derived from his rich congregation, and profits of his literary productions, his income must be large.

#### THEODORE PARKER.

At the large and interesting Unitarian meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern, on June 13th, for the purpose of deliberating on the duty of English Unitarians in reference to the part taken by their American brethren about the Fugitive Slave Law, the Rev. J. G. Robberds, of Manchester College, said—'He was rejoiced that Theodore Parker's name was among those mentioned in the resolution moved by Mr. Armstrong, from the very noble way in which he had stood forward against the Fugitive Slave Law; and, though differing much from his theological sentiments, he had taken an early opportunity of declaring from the pulpit his deep admiration of the manner in which Mr. Parker had publicly and solemnly protested against the above abominable law.' The rev. gentleman added emphatically—'There is no man in America whom, for his conduct on that occasion, I would rather welcome to my pulpit, my home, and my heart.'—*Inquirer*, June 21, 1851. It may not be out of place to mention here a chivalrous act (recently quoted by the *Inquirer* from an American paper), in which Theodore Parker took part a few weeks ago. When the authorities of Boston refused permission to Daniel Webster to hold a meeting in Festival Hall, for the purpose of defending the Fugitive Slave Law, alleging that disturbances (it is to be presumed, from the Abolitionists) would be sure to take place, a number of the Abolitionists, among whom Theodore Parker was one, signed a letter to the magistrates, requesting that their opponent might be allowed to give the public explanation of his views which he desired, offering themselves to suppress all disturbance that might be imagined to arise in consequence. The authorities (to the best of my remembrance) refused the request.

PANTHEA.

### Examination of the Press.

AN EDIFYING EXAMINATION.—In the inquest at Lewes the boy Boakes, who, according to his mother's evidence, had expressed a suspiciously-extreme desire to see the train go by, having been put into the witness-box, the Coroner commenced a line of examination which would have been suitable if the object had been to exclude the boy's testimony, or if the place had been the school-house instead of a court of justice, and the business an inquiry into Boakes's religious education. J. E. Boakes was put into the witness box. The Coroner.—Suppose you do not speak the truth, do you know what will become of you? The boy said nothing, and began to cry. The Coroner.—Do you go to church and say your catechism? Boy. Yes. The Coroner.—Do you know that there is a God who punishes those who speak falsely? The boy again began to cry, and the jury, interfering, said they were of opinion that he ought not to be examined. The boy having been perplexed, confounded, and frightened by the questions so learnedly put, and so germane to the fact whether he had put a sleeper on the rail, the jury, not less wise than the Coroner, were forthwith of opinion that he ought not to be examined, and that justice must dispense with the evidence. On a subsequent day, however, he was again placed in the witness-box, it being clear that in the meanwhile he had been under special tuition and training as to the replies to be made to the questions touching the nature of an oath. The Coroner.—Since you were here on Saturday has any one instructed you on the nature of an oath? Boy.—No. The Coroner.—Have you been told what it is to take an oath? Boy.—No. The Coroner.—you go to school, and has any gentleman explained the meaning of an oath to you? Boy.—No, Sir. The Coroner.—I think you are mistaken. Do you know Mr. Green, the clergyman of St. Ann's? Boy.—Yes. The Coroner.—Has he spoken to you about taking an oath? Do you know it is right to speak the truth? Boy.—Yes. The Coroner.—And if you do not speak the truth do you know what will become of you? Boy.—Go to hell. The Coroner.—There, gentlemen, I think that will do. How old are you, boy? Boy.—Ten, Sir. The boy was then sworn.—'Do you know what will become of you?' 'Go to HELL.' 'There, gentlemen, I think that will do,' says the satisfied, triumphant Coroner. 'Go to hell' was the passport to the Court, 'go to hell' opened its ears, 'go to hell' cleared the way to its credit, 'go to hell' was of excellent acceptance, 'go to hell' was a guarantee for all that was required; and well might the Coroner rub his hands and chuckle, 'There, gentlemen, I think that will do!' The boy was in a state of grace. To be sure, in the three preceding replies he had stated what was not true, that, since his previous examination, he had not been instructed as to the nature of an oath, and that no gentleman had explained it to him; but what mattered this specimen of his veracity, and the value of his evidence, when it appeared that he had so distinct an understanding of the road that lay before him? The Coroner did not say 'a boy who cannot tell the truth about so simple a fact as the instruction he has received within the week is an untrustworthy witness,' but in effect 'It signifies not that he has, from stupidity or mendacity, denied what is true, his answer that he is to go to hell if he does not speak the truth is a sufficient pledge for his credibility.—*Examiner*, No. 2,264.

A FACT FOR CARDINAL WISEMAN.—On Sunday, the 30th ult., Father Mick cursed the parents of the poor children who attend the Protestant school at Bangor, and cursed any person who dared even to speak to them.—*Ballina Chronicle*.

## The Philosophic Type of Religion,

DEVELOPED BY PROFESSOR NEWMAN: STATED AND EXAMINED.

BY G. J. HOLYOAKE.

[Concluded from last number.]

IF, however, the argument of design was established, it would have no practical value unless we could discover the will of God. But here again logical inference affords us no help. For, as far as material nature is concerned, *moral* considerations are, as far as we know, uniformly overborne by mechanical ones. God acts by general laws, and Mr. Newman properly concludes that 'God's *moral thoughts* can no more be detected in the detailed actions of material objects, than the affections of the watchmaker by inspecting a watch.' Thus what is called the design argument rests upon the intuitive perception of fitnesses, which indicate, but do not logically prove, design—and thus the intellect must doubt while the soul may believe.

For Mr. Newman to represent us as being of defective nature, or as suffering intellectual privation, is a less serious allegation than at first sight it appears; it is not a privation not to see as Mr. Newman sees, unless he sees something important which we cannot. By the aid of Mr. Newman's book, we are now able to see all that he sees; and, as it fails to satisfy us, we, in our turn, might with as much propriety assume Mr. Newman to be suffering from some privation in not being able to see its want of validity.

An octagenarian atheist, to whom I mentioned Mr. Newman's accusation that we were deprived of a sense, answered, 'Ah and he is right, too. Faith is another sense. There is no mistake about it. Faith is that sense which enables a man to see what is not.'

Mr. Newman rests his entire theory of religion, not upon any logical proof, but upon the popular—and, as he calls it, instinctive—belief in a self-determining Will, which, except we adopt, we cannot act wisely or well (p. 122). 'If there be no such will in us, it is still useful for practice to believe that there is, and the man who most knows the truth is then most likely to act foolishly. This is so intense a paradox as to confirm most people in their conviction that there is a self-moving will in us.' The answer to this is easy to the thoughtful, and to those accustomed to introspection.

Yet it is clear that innumerable people do act wisely and well without any practical belief in a self-moving will. The judge before he tries a case, and the jury before they hear it, have no will upon the subject. Both wait for evidence, and the verdict and the sentence are determined alone by evidence and by law. Those who take this view of the human will Mr. Newman says ought logically to be atheists. Atheism, therefore, erected on necessarian ground, is a logical system.

On this subject my own feelings and convictions are in strange contrast with those of Mr. Newman. He is able to recognise the presence of Supreme ruling mind only through the existence of Free Will. The presence of government in intelligence, of law in mind, is to him the symbol of atheism and moral anarchy. While to me Free Will seems the synonym of chaos in nature, of disorder in ethics, of confusion in life. I see the influence men can exert on society, and that life is a calculable process. But why is it so? *These* my curiosity is baffled, and my knowledge ends. In vain I look back, hoping to unravel that mysterious destiny with which we are all so darkly bound. That is the channel through which all my consciousness seems to pass out into a sea of wonder, and if ever the orient light of deity breaks in on me, it will, I think, come in that direction. The presence of law in mind, is to me the greatest fact in theology. But no gleam of such truth will ever come through the churches. All churches unite to deny it. I am afraid the secret is in the grave.

The most important objection to this theory of Necessity is that Mr. Newman regards it as being fatal to morals as well as religion. But morality, in its every possible development, recognises, as he himself explains it (p. 25), 'both interest and duty as leading ends of action;' and the necessarian is more likely to discern, calculate, and follow out these ends than the man of free will, who is bound to disregard consequences upon the principle of his assumed mental constitution.

It is not necessary, after these results are arrived at, to debate with Mr. Newman his doctrine of goodness in connection with

the question of the Origin of Evil, or his theory of Wisdom and Reverence, except to say, with respect to the last, that we hope it may be allowed that reverence for virtue and genius may exist in those who are not able to find an object external to nature on whom to repose that affection.

Involved in a struggle for life and liberty, partisans of the atheistic theory, which I should call that of pure moralism, have had few opportunities of dwelling upon the discipline of the affections which they, in common with the Christian, would seek to cherish. Whatever pertains to purity and elevation of character, we value as deeply as the theist. We fully agree with what Mr. Newman so excellently says upon these heads. We do not differ on these points, except as to the mode of carrying them out. Even the sense of sin has with us its defined place. Excess is sin, and, therefore, all deviations from intellectual or physical temperance, is an offence. All omissions of duty, or of love, are offences; which, if they do not involve remorse, involve contrition—that contrition which is expressed by all possible reparation—stricter watchfulness and contingent amendment.

What sense of personal relation to God can any one have whose understanding is baffled in every instance to which comprehension of the divine existence is attempted? Plainly none. Yet to understanding we must come, as we have no other protector than that against the extravagance of superstition. Why religions themselves have so often become degenerate, has been that *will* has not purified them. Men have not seen the improvement of nature and its dependence on circumstance.

We lose little, if anything, by the theory of Pure Moralism (mere moralism Mr. Newman, I fear, would call it): we gain little by that theory of religion which he propounds. He is too far-sighted not to see, and too frank to withhold the admission of the fact, 'that in these days at least no miracles are worked for our welfare, and there is nothing God can grant us (p. 148) except the ideal boon that the Soul may never break away from His love.' Except in things spiritual, Mr. Newman does not pretend that there exists any special providence interfering to save us or to guide us. Atheism does not leave us more without God in the world than this representation; and it at least has this merit, that it forewarns us by its absolute teachings, and thus forearms us against despair. Mr. Newman, too, gives the theory of fear and hope of the

future. In a passage as admirable for its courage as its truth, he says—

'Among ourselves also, beyond a doubt, crime is repressed in bold and wicked men, only by fear of the visible and present judge. Whether hell be in theory believed or disbelieved, it has no practical power, except over the less hardened. But the attempt to turn Religion into a system of State Police, is an impiety, which inevitably defeats its own end. Nor less does it desecrate divine Hope, to apply it as a means of softening the sorrows of the unspiritual. Natural sympathy is far more effective for consolation than any of the conventional topics, poured forth professionally on an uncongenial mind. If Hope is to comfort them in their darker, it must live with them in their brighter hours; it must gush up out of an inward fountain. I know it is said, that the poor are made more patient by the notion so current among them, that in another life they will get compensation for the hardships which they endure in the present; but this is to buy patience by propagating delusion' (pp. 231-2).

We therefore find that human condition is to wait on death with that quiet resignation which flows from innocence and fortitude, and with that unpretentious expectancy which true humility teaches.

The loss which Mr. Newman represents those to sustain who have no sense of personal relation to God is less than he supposes. He thinks that to see in God a person is the most energetic mode of realising our highest ideal of moral excellence, and in clearing the moral sight so that the ideal may keep rising, other things being equal, a spiritual man will hold a higher and purer morality than a mere moralist (p. 157). But what he thus gains in sublimity he is in danger of losing in practical usefulness. Is not the love of humanity a more energetic excitement of the affections than the vague ideal of Deity, which has no hold upon the understanding? Nothing so tends to clear the moral sight as a fraternal yet resolute vindication of the right among living men; and we are sure that our ideal of excellence will always keep rising, as it will grow with our experience and expand with our knowledge—and hence will become a pure enthusiasm overspreading the whole of life. If the ideal we are to take for our guide be gathered from humanity, the moralist and the theist stand on the same level, and derive their inspiration of perfection from the same source; and in the

respect in which the theist affects to elevate his ideal to the skies, he loses in definiteness and verity what he gains by such abstract exaltation. To tell us that the ideal which is to purify us, must be imaginary and abstract is surely not defensible. What is infinite is beside mortals? A very few words spent in distinguishing for adoption a leading moral principle will furnish a man with a guide which will determine his character, employ his life to realise, and conduct him to indefinite nobleness through the infinite steps of the diversified realisations which prolonged years afford. How can the affections manifest themselves or prove their genuineness except by service of our species? We may distrust all spirituality which refuses this proof of its worth. Service and endurance are the two attributes of cultivated and refined moralism—service, by which love is proved, endurance, by which it is tried.

We take Conscience, which Mr. Newman admits takes the lead of conduct in persons of great worth (p. 136). Conscience, which is a subject of growth, and amenable to reason. Conscience, which is capable, Mr. Newman farther allows, of the greatest sacrifices at the call of Duty (p. 137). Stoicism (it matters little whether the name be old or new, provided it symbolise progressive and rational practice) had a true heart in it Mr. Newman allows, as the noble Hymn to Jupiter, composed by the stoic Cleanthes, shows (p. 136). 'We do not indeed doubt,' says Mr. Newman (p. 157), 'that a man's own *self-respect* may make him to choose to die, rather than live degraded in his own eyes, by deviating from his ideal of right conduct: let earnest stoicism be confessed to be noble and honourable; although it makes the mind too exclusively reflective, and endangers pride and self-confidence.'

What of danger may lie in this direction ought to be guarded against undoubtedly, and we think it can. It certainly seems to us that these risks are less momentous than those which spring from the other side of the question. 'Our first want,' Mr. Newman remarks, towards the close of his book, p. 215, 'is the expansion of *individual life*. We need to see and know something for ourselves, and to learn to feed ourselves spiritually. To be *dependent* is hardly to live.' Where can we look for independence so well as to the side of a generous Stoicism?

In lieu of creeds we have the love of Humanity and the study of Nature. We

rely on the cultivation of intelligence and the efforts of industry—our security is in the integrity of our intentions and the kindness of our endeavours—our pleasure is in the reverence we offer—our consolation is in the help we render to inferior natures. *Laborare est orare*—work is our worship.

Of portions of this book (with which I have now done) which seemed to me instructive, I have freely expressed my approbation; and in a manner as strongly and as emphatically as I could command, I have marked my dissent from the unrelenting tenor of the teachings of Mr. Newman, which I think need to be guarded against. The want of cogent, substantial argument for the support of Mr. Newman's theory is so evident, that I trust every one who has been a reader thus far, will be induced to pause before he accepts Mr. Newman's view as the final truth. Many who comprehend no medium between independence of opinion and rudeness of retort, will have been at a loss to account for the approval I expressed in the early part of this review. With many, any agreement whatever is considered as a coincidence throughout. To consult the temper of such readers would condemn a reviewer to perpetual hostility to all to whom he was opposed. These people would leave to no critic the merit of discrimination. Men differ in the nature of their oppugnancy as much as they do in their stature, speculations, voice, and complexion. Not to distinguish and acknowledge an honourable, able, and manly opponent, from the disingenuous, mediocre, and cowardly tribe who daily assault us, is to deserve condemnation for ever to the lowest order of opposition. As respects the government, I am accustomed to urge that we have no right to invoke public opinion upon their injustice, unless we are prompt to acknowledge what is generous in tendency (however little it may be) which now and then they betray. So with controversy—as I hate deeply and heartily what I think erroneous, I endeavour to preserve my right to enter the distinctest protest against it that I am able to put on record, by preserving the temper which shall make the fairest acknowledgments to opponents of that sincerity which I have no right to question, and of that ability which it were want of capacity not to see, want of culture not to feel, want of candour not to own.

## SCENE AT THE REV. CHARLES KINGSLEY'S LECTURE.

UNDER the head of 'The author of "Alton Locke" in the pulpit,' the *Nonconformist* reports that 'A series of discourses on "The Messages of the Church" are in course of delivery on Sunday evenings, at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy-square. The sermon last Sunday evening was by the Rev. C. Kingsley, author of the "Saints' Tragedy," "Alton Locke," and other popular works; and the subject of the evening, "The Message of the Church to Labourers." The preacher selected for his text Luke x. 16-19. From this description by Christ himself of his mission, the preacher deduced the principles of "freedom, equality, and brotherhood"—natural, moral, and political. These, he said, were embodied in the institutions of the Church—an open Bible, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. By those, he contended, the Church protested alike against the tyranny and pride of her own priests, the arbitrary rule of kings, the class-legislation of aristocrats, and the selfishness of the rich and respectable. He exhorted the working classes to hope, on the ground of these embodied principles, for their political and social rights; and assured them that many young and influential men, in the intellectual and affluent classes, touched by the true significance of the Church's services, had consecrated themselves to the "noble cause of the people." While he was pronouncing the Benediction, the Rev. Mr. Drew hastily quitted the communion-table for the reading-desk, and, as the congregation were about to disperse, claimed their attention. He said he had a very painful duty to perform. As minister of that church, in fidelity to the bishop of the diocese, he must protest against the discourse they had heard as most *imprudent*, for the most part untrue, and anything but what he expected from the announcement of the subject. The effect upon the audience may be imagined. Mr. Kingsley offered not a word in reply, but stood with folded arms and beetling brow looking down upon his protesting brother—a striking scene and a melancholy comment on what had gone before. The crowded congregation broke up in much excitement; the greater part discussing the affair in groups until the reappearance of Mr. Kingsley from the vestry. As he passed along the aisle and through the street, he received many audible expressions of sympathy and admiration.'

The *Daily News* and the *Morning Chronicle* have given versions of the affair, with special comments of their own. Mr. Stores Smith, a correspondent of the *Leader*, has supplied the interesting particulars to the Open Council of that paper. Two readers of the *Reasoner*, who were present, send reports which confirm the notice above, with this addition, that the congregation said 'no, no,' and broke into murmurs at the Rev. Mr. Drew's speech. We wish Mr. Kingsley had replied. A little free discussion would serve to ventilate the Churches, which really need a change of air. The Church always *draws* its breath without reference to its health.

No doubt Mr. Kingsley indulges in a measureless invective and denunciation, which men in these days will not tolerate, and which they ought not to tolerate in silence. But let them look to it. Mr. Kingsley can quote Christ in his favour; and no answer can be made to Mr. Kingsley till the Drewites or the Bishop of London have put down Christ.

G. J. H.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, it sending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## THE REV. MR. REES AND THE EXHIBITION.

Sir,—Detesting priestcraft, I embrace the opportunity of relating an incident in connection with the Great International Exhibition of clerical hindrance to progress.

An ingenious mechanic in this town executed a model of machinery which promised to be of much utility, with the full intention of sending it to the Great Exhibition. Now unluckily for him he is a Reesite, and that reverend gentleman put his ban upon the Exhibition. Some little time after the *Sunderland* articles had been sent off, a person was inquiring about this model, and was surprised to learn it had not been sent. Inquiring the reason why of the mechanic himself, he answered—'The Rev. Mr. Rees has so clearly proved that the Exhibition is the Devil's invention, and that all who have anything to do with it are in danger of hell fire, that I at once abandoned all idea of sending it.'

Sunderland.

VERITAS.

## THE NON-EXISTENCE OF ATHEISTS.

Sir,—In No. 72 of 'Chambers's Papers for the People' (a biographical sketch of Fichte, the German Transcendentalist) we are informed that Fichte was accused of atheism, upon which the author of the paper reflects thus:—'Accusations of atheism and infidelity swell everywhere the records of history and of literature; a reader of any compass of comprehension comes gradually to regard them as only sorrowful instances of that mental and moral perversion which inevitably results from imperfect cultivation. For, really, atheism as a faith is manifestly incredible. Who ever knew an atheist from conviction—a man who, using his senses and understanding, yet believed there was no God! It is only the fool that has said so in his heart, and wished it might be true.'

Had the writer of this reflected a little, he might perhaps have seen how he comes himself to be a 'sorrowful instance' of that numerous class who, not content to utter what they know, deal in high-flown platitudes of what they have not taken the trouble to learn the facts.

C. F. NICHOLS.

[The language quoted by C. F. N. is certainly very rude, but it will not last much longer among well informed persons. Many of the writers for Chambers are gentlemen of reclusé habits, scarcely knowing of the existence of anybody but themselves, and may therefore be excused denying the existences, consciences, and convictions to which they have never paid any attention. But the biography of Fichte is so excellently rendered, as well as being excellent in itself, that we are grateful for such a 'paper for the people,' notwithstanding such a passage as C. F. N. cites.—En.]

## ART INDEPENDENT OF CHRISTIANITY.

We are frequently told, Mr. Editor, that 'beauty in art,' which we are assumed to think 'a very worthless thing,' is a most noble, spiritual, divine thing, the inspiration of God himself.

The main purpose of such an assurance seemed to be to enforce the belief that

the God of Israel taught men the right rules and principles necessary to an efficient practice of the arts and manufactures; that he instructed Moses, just as a master instructs an apprentice; and whatever dignity belongs to the practice of arts and manufactures is to be attributed to this their supposed heavenly origin. Hence the conclusion is come to that the atheist must necessarily entertain a low conception of 'beauty in art,' and of the 'dignity of labour.'

Vasari, the accomplished Christian painter, who lived about three hundred years ago, speaks of the origin of the arts thus: 'Simple children, rudely reared in the woods, have begun to practice the arts of design with no other model than those beautiful pictures and sculptures furnished by nature.' One of our own professors of painting, Opie, speaks to the same purpose. He says—'The rudiments of painting appear to me so congenial to the mind of man, that they may almost be said to be born with it.' Further, speaking of art, he observes—'Instead of asking where it *was*, I should be inclined to ask where it was not invented, as the more difficult question to solve.' Thus, with respect to arts of design, upon respectable authority and an appeal to nature herself, we learn that we coincide in opinion with the rest of mankind.

Vasari traces art to the workings of nature. So does the atheist. Even when Vasari comes to speak of a 'divine light,' influenced by which man is led to practise noble arts, and to raise himself above the beasts of the field, he is far from saying that the Hebrew race were so very plentifully endowed with this 'divine light;' rather he reserves his enthusiasm to dilate on the great artists of another people, whose worship was utterly opposed to that of the Israelites.

Moses and the Jewish people are very much indebted to any writer for such honourable mention in connection with the arts. True it is, we are informed that Moses furnished the Children of Israel with some 'curious patterns and designs,' and we also learn that the Egyptians, long before Moses was born among them, designed and worked all kinds of 'curious patterns.' More, we have proof that they were eminently skilful in the practice of the arts of life. Moses, who was educated by the Egyptian priesthood (who were also artists), possibly derived some of his ideas of art from his tutors. But that we will leave to others to determine, who may also favour us with a conjecture as to the source of Egyptian art. A recent traveller fancies that, in constructing the Pyramids, the Egyptians had an eye to the forms of their blue hills. The same imaginative writer traces some resemblance betwixt the columns of their magnificent temples and the beautiful palm trees which abound in those parts. If natural objects suggested ideas of form to that people, the opinion expressed by Vasari and Opie respecting the common origin of the arts of design is materially sustained.

The Assyrians, Phœnicians, and Persians have also some claim to consideration. To whom were those peoples indebted for an induction into the arts and manufactures? Doubtless to nature, the common mother of all.

There never was a more opportune time than the present to remonstrate against the supposition that the arts of life had an especial origin and sanction through Moses on Mount Sinai.

The great International Exhibition contains examples of workmanship of most indisputable excellence, contributed by peoples neither inspired nor influenced by anything written in the Bible. Nations whose histories trace back, through almost trackless ages, to sources in no way connected with the Jews. Peoples not sympathising with the Jews in religious or political motives for exertion, to whom Christianity is unknown, have sent works of art and manufacture to our metropo-



lis for exhibition, with the understanding that they are to be honourably tested with the workmanship of other peoples. How would it give just cause of distrust if, in deciding which of the nations represented display the most skill, the Christian umpires were to set up exclusive Christian pretensions, and deny justice to those whom Christians call Pagan or superstitious? Surely such will not be attempted. For one great social end, the 'sober, practical Saxon has invited the workers of the whole earth to a friendly trial of strength under the verdict of that fine old Saxon institution, the jury;' and should the Saxon meet his guests Bible in hand, and quote Scripture to disparage their contributions, and deny to them culture, merely because they do not write 'Christian' over their studios, workshops, and marts? Such a proceeding would be like reading a funeral service over friendships so generously invoked and so generously responded to.

When we have had leisure to cultivate an acquaintance with the history of the fine arts, we have had to trace our way, for the most part, over classic ground; few of the historians of art directed us to the tents of the children of Israel, or, indeed, to any period of Jewish history. Those historians have mostly been zealous Christians; but *their* knowledge of the Bible would not enable them to assert that the Jewish people, during any period of their strange career, excelled in the practice of the fine arts.

Francis William Newman observes, that 'The whole value of Hebrew history to us turns upon the Hebrew religion.' The same author further says, in contradistinction, it would be absurd to write a history of Greece and take no notice of Philosophy, Poetry, and Art. This writer does no more than pronounce the common opinion of Europe.

CHRISTOPHER.

#### ADDRESS TO THE FREE & INDEPENDENT ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF AYR, BY J. G. PARKER, ESQ., OF ASSLOSS.

It is dated June 3rd, 1851, and after a statement of his political creed—which includes a tax of fifty per cent. on the incomes of gin-palace and beer-shop keepers, distillers, and 'the proud aristocracy,' the crushing of Puseyism, compulsory training of the poor ignorant Papists in Protestant truth, the Bible being the only text-book, and the punishment of Sabbath-breaking, gambling, drunkenness, and uncleanness with hard labour in the dockyards and in the *sewers* of large towns—the candidate for the county of Ayr breaks into the following strain of fervid eloquence:—

I shall now, in conclusion, pray most fervently that our high-spirited, noble Queen may be long preserved, in health and happiness, to reign over a great, loyal, but above every consideration a religious and moral people; and may her gratitude to Jehovah bear some correspondence to the vast obligations she is laid under to act as his vicegerent, with singleness of heart and devotion, when she considers the *terrible risk* she ran on the 11th or 12th of August, 1849, when she committed the *public and flagrant* iniquity of sailing from Belfast on the ever-blessed day of the Lord. Oh! if the great King of Kings and Lord of Lords (whose humble servant I am) had met her and her squadron (which came to anchor in Rotsay Bay, I believe) in wrath, where would her poor lost soul have been but swelling the awful chorus of the damned, in the doleful regions of eternal woe, along with her uncle, George the Fourth, Claverhouse, Lauderdale, Grierson of Lag, Sir Archibald Kennedy, the bloody Lord Advocate, Queensbury, etc., etc., etc.? But

she has been spared to live to his glory, and to be the nursing mother of the true church, the church of Calvin, Luther, Knox, Cromwell (my sainted friend); and of Owen, Howe, Baxter, Bunyan, Boston, and, above all, the immortal Dr. Love of Anderson, the Hameylia or Alps of divines. God bless you all, and success to the canvass.

By the bye, I had almost forgotten Ireland, that sweet but unhappy portion of her Majesty's dominions. The policy of the immortal Oliver Cromwell must be adopted there, the Bible or the sword—the *steam guillotine*, erected wherever the priests of Baal interfere with the consciences of their poor deluded victims, the vile slaves of his unholiness, who sits on the Seven Hills, the foul favourite of the scarlet damsel: and their reverences must be made to taste all the sweetness of this most ingenious machine, to the melancholy, soul-subduing air of, 'He played upon a razor, a razor, a razor, he played upon a razor, fee fa fum,' which my droll friend, Assloss, sings with a considerable share of humour; but we can have no objection that those poor creatures, Wiseman, the Bishop of Exeter, Lord Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, the Irish brigade, and the rest of the synod, should take a harmless game at Pope Joan for a farthing pool. JOHN GLEN PARKER.

#### THE FAREWELL OF THE 'TRUTH SEEKER.'

OF all the magazines which have of late years existed among us, none, in useful honesty, useful truth, and useful courage, have stood out more manfully than the *Truth Seeker*, edited by Dr. Lees. Mr. Phillips especially, and other able coadjutors, have contributed to the *Truth Seeker* papers of remarkable merit. We quote, with sincere regret, the 'Farewell' which it has made to the reading public:—

'With the present volume (concluded in No. 13, containing Table of Contents, etc.) the *Truth Seeker* ceases, at least for the present. For six years we have conducted it, almost single-handed, against the prejudices and intolerance of society. It is our tribute to the Spirit of the Age—our *practical* assertion, not of a barren *right* merely, but of the positive *duty* of Free Thought and Utterance. Satisfied of the influence the periodical has exerted, and of the good it has effected, we do not regret the sacrifices we have made for its support, and most heartily thank the noble few who have to some extent lightened our burthen.

'An apology is due for one circumstance. During our winter's absence, the magazine being committed to other superintendence, two articles were inserted (one by a printer's mistake) of a *party* character, contrary to our rule. It is strictly within our original scope to open our pages to the discussion (*pro and con.*) of Political and Social *Principles*, but not to *party* documents.

'Some papers by Mazzini, on the "Duties of Man," were announced for our next volume, in case of the continuance of the *Truth Seeker*. These, with others by some of our old contributors, will shortly appear in the *English Republic*. The first six numbers of that periodical will be sent, to our subscribers only, for the price of four and a half—*i. e.*, on receipt of twenty-eight postage stamps.'

#### ARE WE OR ARE WE NOT TO PRAY TO THE VIRGIN?

WE copy the following advertisement from a Wexford-paper; and, although the day fixed for the sermon has passed, yet its publication may gain the attention of some priest in the neighbourhood, who ought readily to secure the offered reward, seeing that his church teaches its adherents to offer fervent and frequent prayers

to the Virgin Mary. If there is a scriptural warrant for this practice let it be produced—if there is not, then we shall all be instructed by knowing the value of the authority that does command it:—

‘Thirty pounds reward. A sermon will be preached (if the Lord will) on Sunday evening, March, 1851, in Carnew Chapel, Wexford, by the Rev. John R. Dowse, incumbent of Shillelagh. Subject: Invocation of the Virgin Mary and the Saints. Any person producing from the Bible a single precept teaching persons on earth to invoke the Virgin Mary, or other saints in heaven, shall receive £30 reward. We hold ourselves responsible for the payment of the above reward to any one earning it before the 1st of May next. Wm. C. Moore, Rector of Carnew; J. R. Dowse, Incumbent of Shillelagh; W. W. Cornan, Curate of Carnew.’

**Reasoner Propaganda.**

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 264, 227s.—Arthur Trevelyan, 60s.—Thomas Billington, Pimlico, 1s.—H. C. (per Mrs. Watson), 1s.—H. West, Kent, 2s. 6d.—Julius Aspirant, 2s. 6d.—M. R., Bradford, 1s.—W. B., 1s.—J. W., 1s.—Thomas Johnson, Shelf, 2s.—John Sharp, do., 1s.—W. Wills, Northampton, 1s.—Total, 301s.

☞ All further notices of propagandism, business, and directions, will be found on the wrapper of the monthly parts.

**GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.**

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.  
 July 1st [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room.  
 Question, ‘The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.’—6th [7½], Samuel M. Kydd, ‘Life and Policy of Pitt.’  
 Hall of Science, City Road.—July 6th [7½], a Lecture.  
 Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—July 4th [8], a Discussion. 6th, [7½], a lecture.  
 National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—July 6th [8], P. W. Perfit. ‘Luther, as the Religious Man.’  
 South London Hall, Corner of Webber Street, Blackfriars Road.—July 6th [7½], C. Southwell, ‘Dryden, Rochester, Roscommon, Pomfret, and Phillips.’  
 Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O’Brien, ‘Home and Foreign Politics.’ Every Sunday [7½], on ‘Moral and Social Science.’  
 Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.  
 City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

**ADVERTISEMENTS.**

Works published by J. Watson.

**THE LIBRARY OF REASON**, containing a series of articles from the works of ancient and modern authors in favour of **FREE INQUIRY**. 22 Nos. stitched in a wrapper, with Title and Contents.....price 1 6  
 P.S.—Persons requiring single numbers to com.

plete sets, can procure them from the publisher, or through his agents.  
 Owen and Bachelier's Discussion on the Existence of God and the Authenticity of the Bible. In 1 vol., neat cloth boards, price 4 6  
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 (To be had in Five parts at 6d. each, or in 15 numbers at 2d. each.)  
 Shelley's Queen Mab, with all the notes, 1 vol., cloth lettered ..... 1 6  
 Ditto ditto wrapper 1 0  
 Trevelyan's Letter to Cardinal Wiseman .. 0 1  
 The Revolution which began in Heaven: a Dramatic Vision of Time, by H. Lucas .. 0 6  
 The Freethinker's Magazine, in 7 Nos. at 2d., and 2 Nos. at 6d.  
 Volney's Lectures on History, 1 vol., cloth 1 6  
 Ditto ditto ditto wrapper ... 1 0  
 Frances Wright's Popular Lectures, 1 vol. 3 0  
 Ditto ditto Few Days in Athens .. 1 6  
 1 vol., cloth lettered..... 1 6  
 Ditto ditto wrapper 1 0

London: James Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster-row.

## Our Open Page.

WE received notice, that on June 22nd ult., the Rev. W. Brock would preach, in Bloomsbury Chapel, a sermon to 'young men,' entitled 'Atheism Refuted and Renounced.' Had it been *Denounced* we could have understood it. Is the Rev. Mr. Brock an atheist, that he has to *renounce* atheism? When that reverend shepherd calls upon his flock 'to renounce the devil and all his works,' he evidently supposes them to have some communication with that remarkable individual. It would seem that Mr. Brock has some intercourse with atheism. Mr. Brock's sermon came off at 7 o'clock in the morning—does this gentleman think that we can bear to be refuted before breakfast? Rather too early in the day!

*Pantheism is the doctrine that conscious goodness animates the universe.* Rationalism, in teaching that man's welfare depends on the harmonious development of his own capacities and his harmony with nature and society, rests on the doctrine that goodness animates the universe—that the study of humanity is the study of beauty and goodness. The *consciousness* of the universal goodness it says nothing about—lets alone—but its vivid recognition of the fact that universal goodness and progression *do exist*, often leads it to the *very brink* of the assertion that this is conscious. Extremes meet—and we start to behold the very presence of Deity in 'atheistical' speculations. P.

Mr. Charles Larkin, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, has recently delivered a course of lectures against Atheism, but the language in which he expressed his antagonism was so violent and unjust as not to be hurtful at all to those whom he sought to oppose.

Mr. Palmer, of the Parthenium, St. Martin's Lane, has lately been endangered by breaking a blood vessel; but upon calling to ascertain his state of health, the answer was that he was so far recovered as to be able to walk about again.

Readers in the Paddington district, who may find difficulty in procuring the *Reasoner*, may be supplied by Mr. J. Bowen, Newsvender and Stationer, of 10, Salisbury Street, corner of Little Exeter Street.

The tenth volume of the *Reasoner* is now ready for delivery. We hope in future to be able to give the Index with the last number of the closing volume.

The 66th Monthly Part of the *Reasoner* was issued last week. The matter we had prepared for the wrapper was found nearly enough for eight pages when it was too late to provide a double wrapper. Next month we hope to give eight pages.

A correspondent from Whitehaven writes thus:—'Reading in the *Reasoner* the account of the proceedings at Lancaster, has set me thinking on the subject seriously, and the result of my reflections is this: All readers of the *Reasoner* must see how necessary it is for him and her to exert themselves to aid their persecuted friends; not a town but feels the want of power and influence. Then why do our friends not circulate all the works they think useful, as far as lies in their power? Why keep their numbers of the *Reasoner* idly by them? Give them to others, or send them about. What numbers of books which, by being put in circulation, would strengthen our hands, are lying idle on the shelves of our friends. What use are they if there? We shall have no right to complain of weakness, unless all the means of gaining strength are not applied. Books are quiet but sure weapons to work with. Let our friends bear this in mind, and they will know whose shoulders to put the blame upon.'

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## ADVICE TO THOSE WHO GO TO CHURCH AGAINST THEIR WILL.

THIS week we interrupt the Provincial Reports to answer an inquiry lately made by more persons and with greater earnestness than usual. The last communication put into our box is from a correspondent, well connected in the city, who put his case as follows. It need not be said why we omit name and address:—

'SIR,—I am a young man of 19 years of age. From having carefully perused the works of Volney, Paine, and others, I have become warmly attached to deistical opinions, not, I hope, hastily, but as the result of mature deliberation. I am in the habit of spending the Sunday with my friends, who are exceedingly religious, and accompanying them to chapel. For so doing I have incurred the displeasure of a freethinking friend, who argues that by my regular attendance at chapel I am *assisting* to support an erroneous system, and that it is my duty to stop away, or else give up my deistical opinions. Now, sir, what can I do? If I disclose my sentiments to my relations, they won't discuss the subject with me, but cover me with contempt and scorn, and perhaps disown me altogether, which, to me, would be a serious matter. On the other hand, am I justified in playing the hypocrite, and regularly attending a place of worship, and listening to sermons crammed with inconsistencies and absurdities at which my reason revolts? My object in troubling you with these remarks, is to ask your opinion on the course that I should pursue with most credit to myself. If you will oblige a constant reader of the *Reasoner* with a word or two on this subject in that periodical, I have reason to believe you will be conferring a great favour on many in a similarly awkward situation.'

We should like to have the personal acquaintance and friendship of the 'freethinking friend' alluded to. As he advised so large a sacrifice as that of our young correspondent incurring the loss of his worldly prospects, no doubt he (the 'freethinking friend') was making himself an equally great sacrifice in some quarter, in some way or other. No doubt he was subscribing freely for the spread of his opinions, was active in distributing a knowledge of them, was writing on the subject himself, was getting new readers to the periodical confuting that class of errors to which he was opposed—no doubt he was doing all this at a sacrifice as great as that which he advised. This, no doubt, was the case, because one could not recommend another to do more than one did one's self. And as the number of freethinkers who do so much as this is not too great, we should be happy to make the acquaintance of any others.

The reason for such remarks is that much harm is done by giving advice so severe that it is not likely to be followed, and omitting to point out what equivalent thing may be done if the austere recommendation is not followed. He who advises another to sacrifice himself, is bound himself to set the example. Nor is it of use telling a man to give up his opinions. He cannot give up his opinions at will, and

when he sacrifices himself, he ought to take care that he at the same time accomplishes for the public a good equal to that which he forfeits himself. No question that it is the best thing for a disbeliever to stop away from church—to refuse openly, respectfully, and manfully, and to make his refusal an example to all around him.

It is well to live upon less, to put up with privation, to work harder, in order to enjoy the noble freedom of conscience and action. Where a man is single, and has no relatives depending upon him, he should cast himself at once on the world and freedom, and struggle his way through. The discipline would make his *character* if not his *fortune*. But to those who do not or cannot take this course, let them take care that the evil is atoned for as far as possible, and reduced to as small an offence against the truth as possible.

Undoubtedly it is a fault to go to church when you should be bearing testimony against it. But if you refuse to go and are ruined, and those about you are ruined also, you lose the power of spreading your opinions except by the example of loss incurred, which is not attractive as the world goes. Do this even then. Struggle against going to church as much as you can—embrace every fair opportunity of being absent: say you do not profit sufficiently—that you need instruction in ethics, and you do not get it—that you need a higher ideal of life set before you, and you do not find it furnished. These reasons will always be true and excuse many absences—but will not excuse all. When you *must* go, remember you have to *atone* for it. Ask yourself what you do it for, and devote one half the value of the sum of the advantage to support what you consider the true principles.

If religious people force the compliance of your attendance against your conscience, as the price of your means of actual living according to your station—if you must go to church as a matter of trade, or self-protection, or in kindness to others, you need not give manliness as well as submission. Take vengeance on the church who thus attacks your manhood and honour. Devote half your advantages which you have to purchase by acquiescence, to exploding and bringing into contempt the system which seeks to enslave you. If this course were often taken religious people would soon give over enforcing compliance with their externals. They know that many every day sit down in their churches and chapels who do it reluctantly, and they often boast how they coerce and compel those to come in who despise their effete doctrines. Could they, however, see these persons were bent on exacting that full compensation for their compliance, by well devised and indefatigable retaliation, they would rather tremble than rejoice at the sight of those over whom they now triumph.

The evil is that hundreds who are reluctant church and chapel goers affect to regret the necessity, but never devote a single £5 note to avert it. Many who get £500 and £1000 a year by complying with religious observances, which they feel as fetters, never expend anything to exterminate the system which degrades them. It must be because they are only reproached for their compliance, and are never advised how to extricate themselves through the medium of others. Many comply for the sake of families. If we are to believe this and honour its genuineness and humanity, it can only be on the ground that they give proof of it by real attempts to put an end to the whole system of hypocrisy. It is very common for gentlemen to say, 'I really cannot oppose the Church, it would ruin me.' Nobody wants them. Let them help those who can afford to do it, and do do it even at their own cost. Give adequate means, which we undertake faithfully to employ and honestly to account for, and we will do the work. Were sufficient means supplied for propagandism, in a few years there could be created such a change in public

opinion, that it would be deemed publicly more honourable for all who dislike churches and chapels to stop away than go to them. Once for all we say that those who act the compliant part as respects religious customs for any reasons of weakness, trade, or humanity, and complain of the degradation, and yet devote no part of their religious gains to exterminating the whole system, and do not work where they might work for its destruction—we say we do not believe in their clear-sightedness, or we do not believe in their manliness and sincerity.

This is a large question, involving many points of integrity and honour. It is touched here hastily and imperfectly. Possibly many of our readers will desire to offer their opinions, objecting or confirming. We hope they will do so, for it is one upon which more may and perhaps ought to be said.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

### SEVERAL MATTERS.

A CORRESPONDENT represents that he has been deceived, with reference to our promise of the new Monthly Wrapper. In saying it would appear with the first part of the new volume, we meant the first part wholly made up of the new numbers. We did not foresee that the last Part of the last volume must contain two numbers of the new volume. This was an accident which did not occur to our notice. Thus those who have ordered the last Part of the old volume expecting to find it in the new wrapper have been disappointed, which we regret. It has been explained how it came about that the wrapper now it has appeared is not all we intended it to be. The next part will be found in a double wrapper. To prevent any wrong expectation as to the probable contents of it, let us say that it will be made up mostly of permanent matter, it being intended to keep there such suggestions, addresses, and business directions relative to propagandism as ought to be brought monthly under the notice of our more earnest readers, which notices if kept in the *Reasoner* would occupy space wanted for current events. From time to time will be explained the purposes to which the information on the wrappers may be put. With respect to the addresses of the News-agents, of which we have begun to give a list, we want some reader in each town to inform us whether all the persons whose names we have put down keep the *Reasoner* on sale, as we shall have to restrict the names of agents which we advertise to those who keep the *Reasoner* on sale. It will be of great value to us to be informed accurately who these agents are, and also to be apprised whenever any new agent commences to supply it. It is of service to local agents to be regularly advertised in the metropolis. Our friends travelling to various towns make it a point to purchase of those agents.

The article published in a late number, entitled 'Reinforcement,' is already receiving the responses of friends. Foremost has been Mr. Arthur Trevelyan, from whom we last week acknowledged three pounds, although he had just before contributed five pounds to the new volume.

The Rev. James Fleming, of Lancaster, has completed his review of my lectures, in three numbers of the *Lancaster Guardian*. I have prepared three letters in reply, the first of which has been forwarded for insertion in last Saturday's paper. Next week will appear in the *Reasoner* the first part of the 'Lancaster Controversy.'

We want just seven names, as subscribers of seven sixpences, to complete our thousand for the Abolition of the Taxes on Knowledge. He who closes the list ought to be as memorable as the first purchaser of a Jenny Lind ticket. We shall put down the names in the order in which they arrive. The only fear is, that every reader will think that every other has sent his sixpence, and so we shall not get any, and the list will never be complete. This, we believe, is the reason that the number has not been made up before. The subscriber of the eighth sixpence will have it returned to him, as we only want seven.

G. J. H.

A REMARKABLE UNION OF ECONOMY AND TASTE IN A  
BAPTIST CHAPEL.

THE proprietors of the Baptist Chapel situate in the neighbourhood of the Victoria Theatre, are determined, it would seem, to keep pace with the spirit of the times, and turn an honest penny whenever an opportunity is afforded them. We know not whether it is anywhere set down that Baptist chapels should be strictly set apart for prayer, but this we know that the one referred to is not confined exclusively to that object. The ground floor on the left hand side of the sacred porch is occupied by a picture broker. This tasteful individual, in fine weather, embellishes the spacious area with a collection of pictures by the old masters, interspersed with a few specimens by living artists. The more attractive consist of some female portraits which might pass for members of the court of King Charles II. Without cataloguing the whole assortment, we may note, among the rest, a duplicate of Murillo's famous 'Beggar Boys,' and the 'Return from Hawking,' by Landseer. We do this just to show that the reverend landlords allow their tenant such licence as is indispensable to an amateur in the formation of a popular collection of pictures.

Having said thus much of the broker, we will introduce the broker's next door neighbour—that is the occupant of the ground floor of the sacred edifice, on the right hand side of the porch. We made no inquiries, yet we doubt not she is an honest, hard working woman. Some amateur painter (we feel confident no professional had any hand in it) has enabled the good woman to make known the nature of her calling. The entrance is ornamented with the full-length portrait of a very clumsy-looking mangle. As a picture it deserves to be ranked with the very lowest order of art. Not only has the artist rendered the elegant and highly useful machine in colours glaringly inharmonious, but he has likewise betrayed utter ignorance of the rules of linear perspective. We wonder how the connoisseur on the other side of the chapel door can endure so crude a performance in the neighbourhood. Perhaps he has adopted the humane maxim, 'Live and let live,' and thus tolerates in charity what, as a man of taste, he would feel bound to annihilate. We take it the mangle picture is intended as an average specimen of Baptist art. The dealer's collection we look upon as mere stock in trade, but the mangle is a permanent badge of Baptist taste, nailed in a conspicuous place on the chapel front.

We never heard that the Baptists, as a religious body, ever make any great sacrifices for the promotion of the fine arts, and we have some reason to think they never did. We had been acquainted with their music and singing for many years, having resided near one of their places of worship in a small market town in Berkshire, and we then formed our estimate of their accomplishments in the vocal and instrumental departments. In candour we must own that they sang and played with considerable earnestness, at the same time not with such remarkable skill as to make us esteem our lodgings any the better for being within a respectable hearing distance. Whatever attractions of 'rural sight or sound' the Berkshire hamlet had for our boyish days, neither the architectural decorations of their chapel nor the singing of their choir made anything approximating to a favourable impression on our youthful sensibility. We remember the good Baptists used to lament our plentiful lack of grace, and that we used to smile at their simplicity.

We knew what they could do in music and song—it remained for us to discover what they could do in the pictorial way. Perhaps it is not fair to judge them



solely by the mangle 'fresco' (yet one would think they would not have it nailed on their chapel front unless they took some pride in it). If we are to take that for what they can do, it is the first discovery we have made of their abilities, and we hope it will be the last. We intend to carry our researches into the interior of the chapel, where we expect to make the discovery that the lady of the mangle is also a laundress, and that she has some interest in the bath devoted to the interesting ceremony of immersion. Should such turn out to be the fact, we shall not be at all surprised, after learning to what purposes the authorities can appropriate another portion of the holy mansion. The Icelanders let their churches to tallow-chandlers and fishmongers for store rooms—so says a lady traveller who has recently paid that economical race a visit. We do not think that benighted people any more entitled to credit on the score of their economy than the proprietors of the chapel to which we have directed the attention of Lambeth readers.

CHRISTOPHER.

### THE EARLY MARTYRS NOT ALL CHRISTIANS.

**SALVADOR** is a Jew. It is his idea that the Roman emperors, asserting themselves to be gods from the time of Augustus, paved the way to the worship of the man Jesus. 'The year 12 before the actual era, and more than forty years before the preaching of Jesus Christ, an immense temple in honour of Augustus was inaugurated at the conflux of the Saone and the Rhone. The Gaulish gods acknowledged the emperor, the man god, for their sovereign: obedience and devotion to Rome formed the basis of the worship of this temple. The statues of sixty cities, the most important of the Gauls, represented the homage and subjection, more or less disguised, of all the peoples from the Alps to the Ocean, from the Pyrenees to the Rhine. In this sense, and in a Roman point of view, the Gauls acquired incontestible rights to an honorary title—it merited to be called the eldest daughter of the religion of the divinity of Augustus and of the emperors, in the same manner that this country, some ages afterwards, was thought worthy to receive the title of the eldest daughter of the new church detached from Jerusalem, of the new religion of which Rome has had the destiny to be the expression, the most authentic and the true centre.'—(Salvador's 'Roman Domination in Judea,' vol. i., pp. 335-6.)

I would call your attention particularly to these last words, because they seem exactly corresponding to those which you are represented as having expressed in the late discussion with the Rev. Mr. Scott.

Another remarkable fact he appears to substantiate is, that the Romans did not, for a long time, know the difference between Christians and Jews. They knew that all the Jews were expectant of a Christ or Messiah. When they called them (the Jews) Christians, they only meant those who had this belief, without attaching it to the person of Jesus. The mention of Christ crucified by Tacitus he declares to be an interpolation, which also was the judgment of the late Rev. Mr. Taylor. Thus the martyrdoms ascribed to the Christians, Salvador affirms to have been suffered by the Jews.

Even under Augustus the Jews were well known at Rome, from the frequent mention of them by Horace, who, when told of a miracle, said a Jew may believe that. He wishes to speak on business with a friend, who says it is the Sabbath of the Jews, let us not offend their prejudices. The answer of Horace is worth giving in classical language, as you or your readers may wish it for a motto—'Nulla mihi, unquam religio est,' which Englished is 'I never had any religion.' His friend answers so exactly in the strain of the religious sentimentalist of the present day that it is worth giving—'At mi: sum paulo infirmior, unus multorum.' English—'But I am a little weaker on that point; I am one of the many.'

W. J. B.

### Examination of the Press.

THE HISTORY OF SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT.—This is a record of facts, pleasantly rendered, relative to the imprisonment of the author, in 1842, for blasphemy. The work is divided into four chapters—before the imprisonment; the trial; after the sentence; and after the liberation. A very high compliment is paid to the accomplished Mr. Birch in the 'Dedication.' This gentleman is author of the 'Inquiry into the Religion of Shakspeare,' a charming book for the literary man. Any one might feel proud of having such a compliment paid him. Although there may have been some unnecessary daring in Mr. Holyoake when he uttered the words for which he was prosecuted and imprisoned, yet we have no sympathy whatever with prosecutions for opinions. Our talented townsman, Mr. Samuel Bailey, in his 'Formation of Opinions,' has taught us the utter absurdity and wickedness of anything of the kind. In the celebrated inaugural address of Lord Brougham, the doctrine is clearly laid down, that it would be as reasonable to persecute a man for having red hair, or a crooked nose, or a cast of the eye, as for having certain opinions. This appears to have been fully verified by this six months' imprisonment. From first to last, Mr. Holyoake appears to have bothered policemen, magistrates, judges, counsel, jailors, turnkeys, prisoners, prison inspectors, the Home Secretary, and Parliament itself. Even after the imprisonment was over Mr. Holyoake fired another shot, the effects of which, we have no doubt, are now felt in the improved discipline of the prison where he was incarcerated. We apprehend that all the officers connected with the prosecution and imprisonment were heartily glad when they were rid of it. Many *piquant* sketches appear throughout the book. We are glad to find that our talented member, Mr. Roebuck, who sat for Bath at that time, brought the case before the Home office and Parliament. Sir James Graham stated in the House, in answer to him, that 'there had been serious irregularities and unnecessary harshness in the case of Holyoake;' a very severe reproof, which was heavily felt. The report of the trial is taken from the reporter's notes. At another part of the trial, honourable mention is made of the conduct of the ladies—and a touching recital of the occurrence brings our townsmen, John Fowler and Paul Rogers, out in a pleasant and honourable position. We trust our readers will possess the book, as its perusal will suggest many important ideas at the present time.—*Sheffield Free Press*, May 3, 1851.

THE 'NONCONFORMIST' AND THE 'LAST TRIAL FOR ATHEISM.'—Mr. Holyoake is not a person with whom one *can* or *ought* to sympathise greatly: but we deprecate and deplore all such legislative interference with religious opinion as he has suffered from; and his case shows it to be bad in principle, and most injurious in its effects. We *must* take *his* part, and not the wicked law's, in this most *un-Christian* prosecution.—*Nonconformist*, June 11, 1851. [Several reviews of the 'Last Trial' have been prepared by journalists, and have been suppressed by clerical influence connected with the respective newspapers for which they were prepared. This has been communicated by a friend under whose notice one or two cases have come.—ED.]

A BISHOP SUPPORTING DISSENT.—The Bishop of Durham has subscribed £15 towards an Independent Chapel, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at which that champion of dissent, the Rev. T. Binney, preached on Sunday week.—*Preston Chronicle*, June 28, 1851.

## Religion, Atheism, and Art.

BY CHRISTOPHER.

IN the service of Christianity, the fine arts have unquestionably arrived at great maturity and perfection. Raphael and Michael Angelo went far to rival the ancients; but the ablest judges, even amongst devout Christians, decree the palm of superiority to the ancients, and the ablest Christian painters and sculptors have vied with each other in paying honour to the painters and sculptors of Greece. It is refreshing to read with what warmth and enthusiasm the painters of Italy, while in the service of the Pope, could speak of the sculptured deities whose worship, as Catholics, they must have been taught to hold in abomination. We trace this liberal conduct of Christian artists to the enlightened principles of the arts in which they were so well accomplished. It would have been easier to have persuaded Michael Angelo that he was Pope Clement than to have wrung from him any other decision than that Phidias was the greatest of sculptors. The principles which regulate the judgment of the artist are absolute as the laws of nature. To him art is but 'nature methodised.' Nicolas Poussin, who painted at Rome till 1665, having studied Raphael and the antique with so much profit as to win for himself a place beside the first-class painters of Italy, made the following striking comparison betwixt Pagan and Christian artists. He said—'Compared with your moderns, Raphael is an angel; compared with the ancients, he is an ass.' This painter-like comparison has been mainly borne out, though in milder language, by the majority of eminent critics.

Italian painters, although engaged to adorn Christian churches, knew that it would be vain to seek among Christian archives for materials for their art. The Joves, Junos, and Apollos of Pagan worship formed the basis of that excellence to which painting and sculpture were carried by Da Vinci, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Julio Romano, and the Carracci. Those Christian artists knew that the materials for beautifying Chris-

tian churches were only to be found among the ruins of Pagan temples.

The statuaries and painters of Greece were indebted to the demands made upon them by the priests for the excellence they achieved, and which to this day has not been equalled. The attributes of their deities, heroes, philosophers, and poets (amongst whom a sort of relationship existed) taxed the artist's invention to the uttermost, and drew forth the most perfect types of every variety of form and character.

The Athenians pursued art in that liberal spirit which mankind would do well to infuse into all their undertakings. Throwing aside everything which prevented its full and complete development, their productions soon furnished a remarkable contrast to the crudities of older nations. The history of the world does not present more hopeful and inciting evidence of perseverance and success in pursuit of excellence than the labours of the Grecian chisel. Never was there a more striking demonstration of what great things a people can accomplish whose genius is unfettered and uncontrolled. Hitherto sculpture and painting had been pursued like vulgar crafts, realising the most barren conceptions, and employed only as the language of prejudice, bigotry, and intolerance. Through almost trackless ages the self-same idols reared their hideous shapes, adequate to the purposes of the priesthood and for the worship of peoples unnumbered. Art arose in Greece—to use a figure of one of her poets—'like a Day drawn by white steeds,' a glorious light amidst a world of 'darkness which might be felt.' Ages have elapsed, and Greece has passed away, but the glory which crowned the efforts of her aspiring sons in the free exercise of the arts remains undiminished and unobscured.

Fortunately, it is possible, without quitting England, to acquire a knowledge of the works of Grecian artists; laudable care has been taken to purchase many of the most precious fragments as they

have been 'dug from their grave for ages.' Of those which might not be purchased, accurate casts have been procured, which, in the absence of the originals, serve the student for exemplars. There is a collection of Grecian sculptures in the British Museum, another at Oxford, and many smaller ones in different parts of the country. Miniature casts, bearing some resemblance to the originals, are hawked in almost every town; and whether looking at the mutilated fragments in the state in which they were exhumed, or the large authentic casts, many of which have been restored (that is, the casts have been supplied with missing portions by ingenious sculptors), or judging only from the shilling attempts at imitation vended in the streets, they are at once recognised as the almost perfect types of fair-proportioned manhood and womanly gracefulness. Some appear to us as deities, but they are estimated only as wonders of art—as impersonations of man and woman, beautiful, graceful, and energetic.

It will be seen, upon consulting the history of the fine arts in their connection with religion, that they have been fostered and perfected, or neglected and degraded, just as priests have desired and willed—and this without reference to any particular nation. Thus in Egypt the arts were pursued under the most degrading conditions; and so also by the descendants of Abraham. On the other hand, to the artists of Greece every incitement was held out which might induce them to excel. To the Egyptians little, and to the Israelites belong no sort of renown for the works of their sculptors and painters. In contrast, Greece is called the Mother of Arts. The works of Grecian sculptors evidence the greatest nicety of perception, enlarged and refined conception—and more, the rare practical accomplishment (so difficult to master) to realise fully to the comprehension of others that which was deemed worthy of being perpetuated.

To old Rome belongs the doubtful reputation of having despoiled the temples of Greece of their best works of art, and of having afterwards highly appreciated them. It seems to have troubled the Romans very little with respect to whom their gods were, where they came from, what they were made of, or

by what process they became possessed of them; hence, on their acquisition of Grecian deities, they found no scruples to prevent their giving them the highest places of honour in their own temples. Thus the gods of Greece became the gods of Rome. But not so the skill which created those gods. Rome could plunder others of their godly creations but could not steal the ability to create for themselves.

In turn, the barbarians, and then the Christians, arose in great strength, and demolished the divinities and other images which the Romans had been at so much pains to accumulate. Afterwards the caste of the Christians altered, and they displayed the greatest zeal to dig up and collect together the fragments of the images they had broken, and to make good the havoc they had made. Further, they established schools of painting and sculpture for themselves. It is known to what the arts have arisen under the sanction of religion. It remains to be shown what use can be made of the arts by those who have no religion in the ordinary acceptation of the term, for, in all the cases we have mentioned, a religion of some sort or other was the chief incitement to artistic effort.

For our acquaintance with the several religions of India, Egypt, Greece, and ancient Italy we are chiefly indebted to the arts of design, which were monopolised by the priests of those nations to furnish the symbols for imparting religious instruction to the masses of the people. Many interesting particulars have been brought to light concerning the Egyptians, in whose temples and tombs an unceasing investigation is pursued by learned and indefatigable Europeans. The priests of that ancient race appear to have considered religion the only subject worthy to be recorded in paint and in stone. Whatever paucity of record may be felt respecting some of the habits of that people, almost every stone of their vast buildings is a written tablet to enlighten the scholar on matters pertaining to their religious observances. Egyptian art, if the term may be allowed, was strictly conventional. Idols were designed by the priesthood, and forms thus furnished were held inviolable. Those idols not being self-explanatory, a series of hieroglyphics were needed to explain them—

these were likewise designed by the industrious priests. Some of the objects selected to illustrate the idols were of a loathsome nature. The cat, dog, and crocodile were amongst the objects most revered of those set before the people. The selection shows anything but a dainty taste on the part of those who made it—one certainly not likely to initiate a love of the beautiful. Those first-class idols Osiris and Isis were very uncouth, and the Sphinx was sufficiently monstrous to be the mother of all the monsters which ever haunted mankind.

Sympathy does not, ought not, to exist betwixt Egyptian sculptures and modern art. The chief characteristics of those sculptures are opposed to the common principles of nature; nature is outraged by them, and every noble aspiration suffers by their contemplation. There are reasons why the remains of Egyptian tombs, temples, obelisks, idols, and mummies are valuable to modern teachers; but there are no reasons why those idols should not be rejected by those who aspire to excellence in the arts of design. Not in contempt of the religion which they typify are they rejected, but because they want beauty and dignity and grace.

The children of Israel, who were indebted to the Egyptians for the little knowledge they had of the arts of design, were subjected to similar regulations, and they never achieved a name for the creation of ideal beauty and gracefulness on canvass, in stone, wood, ivory, or brass. The calf idol which they manufactured in the wilderness (probably an imitation of the red heifer of Osiris) brought them little encouragement; no sooner did their great lawgiver perceive the beast than he broke it to pieces, and caused three thousand of the 'stiff-necked' idolators to be slain. Afterwards the Jews were supplied with patterns, made everything to order, and took care to make nothing on their own responsibility. Moses gave out that he received the patterns he furnished to the Israelites from the hands of God. Such might have been the case, though some are inclined to believe they were but imitations of patterns Moses had been familiar with all his life in Egypt. In justice to the Egyptians, the matter ought to be decided. If a similar dis-

pute about patterns occurred in these times, a party standing in the light of the Egyptian priesthood would have little difficulty in obtaining damages for an infringement of their copyright.

We have been accustomed to consider useful manufactures in their commercial, economical, and political capacity, and thus estimated them with respect to their value to society. The more mere manual operations may become associated with the fine arts, and derive additional worth from the connection, so much the greater will be our satisfaction, so much the more will they rise in our estimation.

Painting, poetry, music, and sculpture we esteem as elegant speculations, involving no less than a people's refinement—that, entertained in their pure and simple capacity, they elevate and ennoble the mind, and, in the purity of their culture, furnish no uncertain testimony of a nation's morality.

Some writers speak very confidently of religion being the source of art both in ancient and modern times, but there is a vagueness in this language which amounts to a considerable pretension, misleading the reader as to the facts of the case. People suppose that Christianity, or the genius of the true religion, has been the source of it all. Whereas in ancient times the arts arose and attained to a perfection which the epoch of the true religion has certainly not surpassed. As we have shown, the kind of religion extant at the commencement of the arts was the Pagan religion, which had a large element in it both of materialism and humanity. What characterises, what stamps the great efforts of the early artists are features strongly human: indeed all their divinities are human in their embodiments. This element of humanity entered like a strong inspiration into the celebrated efforts of which we are speaking—is quite appreciable by the atheist in any age, and may be considered as a common condition capable of ensuring greatness in the arts among any people of intellectual capacity, upon whom ordinary cultivation shall be bestowed. It is no uncommon thing to find modern divines representing the entire pagan world as being without God, or without the inspiration of the true religion. Indeed it

seems agreed on all hands, so far as religious writers are concerned, that the ancients are very much to be pitied for having been born so early, when they could not avail themselves of the classical genius of the Evangelists or the elegant speculations of the man of Tarsus. But what strikes us with most force is, that if the ancients accomplished so much *without* religion, why may not other people hope to attain to some degree of cultivation in the same way, seeing that a common humanity belongs to all, and that the world is full of tragedy and poetry in every age? It is very much overlooked that it is come to be considered a vulgar state of the critical faculty which sees no distinction between religion and morality. In these pages opponents have often been reminded that sufficient concessions have been made of late years to establish the fact, so far as eminent authority is concerned, that morality is independent of religion.

The philosophic critic and the defender of divinity only contend now for the eminence of religion, as shedding a brighter and purer light over the field of ethics. Morality, which is independent of religion, and may exist equally well with atheism, is only now depicted as being of a lower kind than that possessed by the more fortunate Christian. There is no reason, therefore, to deny a taste for the arts, or even proficiency in them, to the atheist. It is no longer a question of fact, but one of degree. In determining this degree, the Christian of course awards the palm to himself; but the fact that the capacity belongs, in some lesser degree, to his opponent is no longer to be disputed. The question then arises, whence is the inspiration of atheistical art to come? We answer, morality is an inspiration, and that in

the kingdom of secularism all the riches of nature are opened to the student therein.

It has been shown, over and over again, that in Poetry and the Drama, two of the highest branches of imaginative art, there are no sources of inspiration so profound as those of nature, so moving as those of human incident; and we have never heard that nature and the tragic incidents of human life are the peculiar property of the Christian.

From all, therefore, that history speaks, facts suggest, or inference informs us, there is no reason to suppose that the appreciation, the love, and the cultivation of the arts may not be found dwelling with the atheists as a body as well as with Christians.

How far these conclusions are from being ideal the historical reader may soon satisfy himself. In the periods when Christianity has been most intense it has been most opposed to art. The Puritans, for instance, despoiled the noblest examples of secular genius, and whatever ancestors less religious than themselves had borrowed from Pagan quarters to adorn their temples of worship with. Even to this day the struggle still goes on, and the sceptic has to stand between the pietist and the degradation of art, which can never move in saintly harness, and is nothing unless free. There are not wanting Christians who would put petticoats on the Grecian Slave of Power now in the Exhibition, and fit out Apollo with a suit from Holywell Street, in order to comply with Christian decorum—a certain compound of prudery and affectation, very far removed from nature, truth, and chastity. In a practical sense, we think it may be proved that art rather lives in spite of religion than in consequence of it.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, it tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## THE SECRETS OF NATURE.

SIR,—I observe, in No. 236 of the *Reasoner*, that Mr. Harrison demanded of me 'where the first man came from?' He wanted a direct reply, he said. I gave him one. I said, *I did not know*, 'I was not in the secrets of nature,' &c. As I wish for information on that topic, and on the creation of the world, I deemed it prudent to write you, and if you can give me no other reply, no other mode of responding to opponents; even then, an answer will be very acceptable.

I cannot believe the Bible history of the beginning of man and of the world, it being unreasonable and unsolid; and I cannot accept the theory of progressive development, it being so intricate and unsatisfying. To say, as an absolute answer, that I do not know how the world and man originated, sounds somewhat inelegant; although I presume it to be the most logical one. I consider it essential to have fixed opinions, and I hope you will not think me intruding in soliciting information.

Should you vouchsafe a reply, I should communicate the result to several of my friends who know of my intention of addressing you, and who are equally desirous of enlightenment as myself.

You may be pleased to learn that the *Reasoner* is read in Clapham by persons persons who believe in its contents.

A CLAPHAM TRUTH-SEEKER.

[To confess to want of knowledge where you have it not is no doubt 'inelegant,' as this querist terms it—but inelegancy is better than presumption. Other replies may be given, but they involve details which lead from the subject of debate. The one which confesses to want of knowledge has the advantage of pressing the Christian to unravel himself and reveal what he knows.—ED.]

## TERMS OF SOCIALISM.

SIR,—In 263 of the *Reasoner* Mr. Holyoake reports himself to have replied in answer to a question, that 'Conscience is a man's sense of duty, and it implies responsibility to himself and to his fellows.' This statement coming from a disciple of Mr. Owen is extraordinary, and seems to imply a denial of one of the most essential principles of Socialism. If, as Mr. Holyoake states in *Reasoner* No. 184, p. 354, 'man neither made his nature nor his condition,' but 'owes his actions to the destiny of his organisation and position,' then 'conscience' or a 'sense of duty' must result from these two sources of thought and action. Hence to affirm that responsibility is thus implied, seems in direct opposition to the nature of things. If man be responsible for his 'sense of duty,' then the structure of society is based on a correct foundation, and it is mere folly in Mr. Owen to talk of substituting the new principle of human irresponsibility.

Of man being responsible to himself seems scarcely conceivable, if the ordinary definition of the term be understood, viz., accountable or answerable to society for actions committed. It is time Socialists turned their attention to the recasting of such terms; no one conceives that in dealing with human actions the Socialist takes no heed of the individual, but it is done with a view to personal improvement, not violently and vindictively to punish him for doing what he *could not help*.

Hence the necessity for such terms as responsibility being abandoned and *better* put in their place. Zeno's servant being caught in a theft urged that 'it was his *destiny* to steal;\*' 'and to be *beaten*,' replied his master, which was more worthy of a witty than a wise man, because the latter could not fail to perceive it to be *unjust* to punish him for what he could not help. Perhaps this will serve to induce others to make some practical suggestions on this matter.

Glasgow.

CLEON.

[Cleon should tell us what answer he would give to the question put to Mr. Holyoake. Cleon's interpretation of terms is that which has before time condemned Socialism to argumentative impotence. When he replies, giving his own answer, we shall see better what his notions are; at present it is hard to believe that he means all that his letter implies.—ED.]

## POPULAR ENGLISH PREACHERS.

THE REV. WILLIAM JAY, OF BATH.

LONDON is the great central reservoir of pulpit, as well as of every other sort of talent, but it must be admitted that among those who occupy the sacred desks in the Provinces, are very many great and distinguished men. Foremost among these is one who may aptly be termed the Nestor of the Pulpit. Such is the 'old man eloquent' of Bath—William Jay!

Who does not know the city of Hot Water, and of ancient Dowagers—the realm of King Bladud—the scone of Bean Nash's trumpery triumphs, and the still gay metropolis of the West of England? For considerably more than half a century Mr. Jay has been the dissenting 'lion' of that particular place, and the Rowland Hill of the provincial Pulpit; like the latter his course has been marked by a blending of piety with eccentricity. Mr. Jay commenced his career in the chapel of which he has been pastor such a number of years in rather a singular manner. Somewhere in Wiltshire was situated an academy for the reception of young men preparing for the ministry, over which establishment presided the Reverend Cornelius Winter. Jay, then a young man, but recently promoted from the plough-tail by some shrewd friend who had pierced through the rough crust of the raw country youth, and discerned the vein of genuine talent which ran and sparkled underneath, was a pupil of Mr. Winter's, but had never made his appearance before a congregation as a preacher, although repeatedly urged to 'break the ice' by his preceptor.

One Saturday afternoon young Jay received a summons to attend on Mr. Winter, in the study. When he entered the sanctum, the old gentleman handed him a note, and said—'Mr. Jay, the weather is fine, and as you have been hard at work all the week perhaps you would like a ride to Bath?' Young Jay made no objection, and Cornelius Winter produced a note he had just written. 'This note,' he remarked, 'I wish to be conveyed to the Reverend Mr. —, of Argyle Chapel; he lives in the Orange Grove, Bath, not far from his place of worship. Please to hand this to him, and he will give an answer. Remember—you must see him yourself. The Bath coach passes the door of the house in an hour from now, so get ready at once, and here is the amount of the fare.' So the student, who had often heard of the gay city of Bath, but had never visited it, attired himself in the best clothes which his humble means afforded, jumped on the Bath coach, and with heart and

\* Rationalism, p. 37.



spirit light entered the gay city, and speedily made his way to the Orange Grove. The house of the *then* popular minister of Argyle chapel was soon found, and like many thousand other bearers of letters, the young man, 'indifferent to the tidings he conveyed,' knocked at the door, and inquired for the Reverend Mr. —. He was at home; Jay was ushered into his study, and delivered the letter from Mr. Winter. Mr. — deliberately read it, and then calmly folding it, he eyed the young man—and holding out his hand, said, with the most perfect *nonchalance*, 'Mr. Jay—you must preach for me to-morrow.' 'Preach, sir! preach for you, sir! to-morrow morning?' asked, or rather gasped, the agitated young man. 'Mr. Winter has sent you to me for that very purpose,' observed the old minister, and he added—'To-morrow I am engaged at Bristol, and I applied to Mr. Winter for a supply—he has sent *you*. So, as preach you must and shall, it is necessary you should at once make some preparation. I am now about to leave. Here are books at your service, and every thing else you can require.' Leaving young Jay in a state which many a young minister may imagine, and feeling completely 'trapped,' Mr. — courteously bade adieu to his 'supply' for the morrow.

Left by himself—thrown upon his own energies—the self-reliance of the student was called into action. He knew that he could not 'back out' of the matter; indeed, if he had been inclined to shirk the sermon, and the preparation for it, he would have found any effort to do so abortive, for on Mr. —'s leaving the study, he quietly locked the door, and the young man was a close prisoner; so he remained until the old minister's wife summoned him to the tea-table.

How he was employed during the interval it is not necessary to inquire—let us hear how he acquitted himself on the Sunday morning. At the appointed hour the good folks of Argyle Chapel were not a little surprised to see a young man emerge from the vestry and ascend the pulpit stairs. Some of the old members looked vexed at this, for there were among them not a few who have an idea that if they pay their minister so much per annum, they have an undoubted claim to the whole of his services; and that their pastor has no right whatever to leave, even for the sake of recruiting his health, or for the purpose of resting his mind by preaching one of his old sermons to a fresh congregation. As the stranger took his seat in the pulpit, there were sundry nods and winks and contemptuous tossings of chins, for 'his youth' was against him. Some, not seeing their old pastor in his pulpit, opened their pew doors and went out, and the great majority of those who remained behind would have followed such bad examples had not a feeling of shame restrained them. Young Jay timidly rose, and commenced by giving out his text. It was one singularly *apropos* to the situation in which he was placed. After naming the chapter and verse, he paused for a moment, and then somewhat astonished his hearers by pronouncing, slowly and distinctly, words selected from the touching narrative of Abraham and Isaac, and from that part of it where the patriarch is represented as about to sacrifice his beloved son. Young Jay simply read these words:—'And the lad knew nothing of the matter.' Great was the effect, so pointedly were the words delivered; and the youthful, nay, the boyish appearance of William Jay heightened the curiosity of the congregation as to what would come next. They were not left long in doubt, for with a gravity beyond his years, the young man proceeded to develop his subject and to delight his hearers. There was such an absence of affectation, so little (if any) straining after effect, by essaying wild flights of imagination, that even the grim old clerk relaxed his iron visage, the ancient members severally looked pleased, and the young folks were delighted.

Jay was once invited to dine with an old lady after an anniversary sermon--about a dozen sat down to an exceedingly ill-furnished table, and the keen eye of Jay detected the shift resorted to by the thrifty hostess to make a very little go a very long way. He was too fond of sarcasm to allow an opportunity to pass by when such offered itself, and on being asked to say grace he rose, and glancing half comically over the barren waste of table cloth, he quoted two lines from a well-known hymn,

‘Lord! what a wretched land is this,  
Which yields us no supply!’

and then sat down to the Barmecidal feast.

Not very long after Mr. Jay's first sermon at Argyle Chapel, he became pastor of the congregation assembling there, Mr.——, his predecessor, having died—and where he still remains, as attractive as ever, after more than sixty years continuance in his office. Let us now depict him as the Pastor of to-day; as the octogenarian soldier of the Cross!

More, considerably more than half a century has passed away; Bath is a far more quiet place than it was sixty years ago. Cheltenham, Brighton, and a host of other fashionable places of resort have sprung up, and eclipsed the Western Spa. Ruffles and rapiers no longer flutter and jingle in the Pump Room; and Sydney Gardens, the Vauxhall of the provinces, live but in the memories of faded beaux and decayed beauties;—but Argyle Chapel (modernised, it is true,) still remains; and the voice which was heard so many years ago, mellowed by age, still echoes within its walls.

The congregation assembling at Argyle Chapel is what may be called a rich one—perhaps a fashionable one; and so, of course, everything is quietly and easily done. There is very little shuffling of feet; and only the rumpling of rich silks disturbs the stillness of the place. The pew-openers are patterns of propriety—not clumsy persons who trudge heavily down the aisles, and swing open doors, and when you are passed in, bang them to again;—nothing of the kind;—they walk as though their feet were shod with felt.

Mr. Jay is of the middle height, stoutly built, and his broad shoulders are bowed by age. There is something in the massive head of Mr. Jay which reminds one of the grand old head of some ancient statue of Jupiter; it is large, and abundantly covered with silvery hair, which, sweeping from one of the temples, discloses a splendid forehead. The eyes are dark, bright, lively, and searching. Eyebrows large, of a darkish grey, overshadow these ‘windows of the soul,’ as some old writer has called them. The nose is short, and not classically formed, and the mouth is, if anything, a trifle too large for the connoisseur in such matters. A double chin fades imperceptibly away into a short neck, which is connected with a broad, expansive chest.

The style of Mr. Jay is one exclusively his own. He imitates no one. Usually, he commences his sermons with some abrupt, terse observation, which would seem to have little to do with his subject, and which sometimes, indeed, *has* nothing in connection with it. He is not rapid in his delivery, but rather the reverse; his sentences are delivered with great emphasis. His discourses may sometimes be almost called conversational, for he talks *to* people, as well as *at* them. Occasionally he produces an effect by a solemn strain of eloquence, immediately following some remarks which had, spite of the sanctity of the place, provoked a smile; for, as in the case of Rowland Hill, he has a flow of wit which cannot always be restrained. It is not an uncommon practice of his, to select rather peculiar

texts—take for an instance his funeral sermon for Rowland Hill, when he chose as the motto of his discourse, the words ‘How! fir trees, for the cedar has fallen!’—*Partridge and Oakley’s English Preachers.*

### DEATH OF DAVID HETHERINGTON.

MR. DAVID HETHERINGTON, the only son who survived his father, Henry Hetherington, expired at Manchester last week after a fortnight’s illness of the small pox. Previous to the death of his father he entered the establishment of Mr. Abel Heywood, of Manchester, a situation which afforded him great pleasure; and the manner in which he always spoke of Mr. Heywood was honourable to that gentleman. David lived with his mother, whom he mainly, if not entirely, supported. The old lady is now left alone in the world. David resembled his father personally and in disposition—and all who knew him will hear of his death with regret.

The John Street Institution will be closed on Sunday the 13th, in consequence of the members and friends taking an Excursion to Alperton.

#### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.—July 8th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, ‘The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.’

Hall of Science, City Road.—July 13th [7½], G. J. Holyoake, ‘The Prayer of the Archbishop of Canterbury on the Opening of the Great Exhibition examined.’

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—July 11th [8], a Discussion. 13th, [7½], a lecture.

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—July 13th [8], P. W. Perfit. ‘Luther, as the Reforming Man.’

South London Hall, Corner of Welber Street, Blackfriars Road.—July 13th [7½], C. Southwell, ‘Addison, Prior, Fenton, Hughes, Sheffield, Congreve, and Blackmore.’

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O’Brien, ‘Home and Foreign Politics.’ Every Sunday [7½], on ‘Moral and Social Science.’

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

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### Our Open Page.

THE following 'public notice' has been posted about Drayton Parslow, Buckinghamshire, by a landowner and clergyman:—"Whereas some of my tenants on the Diggin's and Henley's piece, have of late been very irregular in their attendance at church on the Sunday; and so have not complied with the agreement entered into between landlord and tenant, "That each tenant should, as often as possible, be present at divine worship on the Lord's day." I give this timely notice to all whom it may concern—That unless I see them more regular at church than lately they have been, such persons absenting themselves for the future will be required to give up their land on Michaelmas-day next, without further notice.' The *Aylesbury News* asks, 'Is the Pope of Rome as intolerant as this Protestant clerical landlord?'

On Sunday evening next Mr. G. J. Holyoake will lecture at the Hall of Science, City Road, on 'The Prayer of the Archbishop of Canterbury on the opening of the Great Exhibition, and an exposition of what he had better have done than delivered it.'

Mr. Harding, editor of the late *Republican* magazine, the readers of that journal will regret to hear has for some time been in a precarious state.

In the course of a lecture lately delivered at Gloucester, by the Rev. W. C. Osborn, Chaplain of the Bath Gaol, the rev. gentleman stated that during six years, 55 children in Bath Gaol had cost the country £6,050, which would have paid for sending them all to a boarding school. Of these, 5 were dead, 15 transported, 30 leading a criminal life, and about 5 only of whom he could say they were not candidates for transportation.

Six short Tracts, written by Mr. Owen and printed on one sheet (a convenient form to secure their perusal, the subjects being sequential), have been issued by the Committee of Social Propaganda for circulation at the International Exhibition. These Tracts can be obtained at Mr. Watson's, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster Row, and Mr. Truelove's, 23, John Street, Fitzroy Square. For further information on these topics see, 'Robert Owen's Journal,' and other works of Mr. Owen, which may be had of Mr. Watson or Mr. Truelove, or obtained through other publishers and booksellers.

The *Rambler* (Roman Catholic) for this month has a laboured eulogy upon one Ippoliti Gallantini, *alias* 'the apostolic Silkweaver.' This sainted man, we are told, had such an eye for the spiritual welfare of his fellow worms, that he was accustomed to take the children of Florence outside the city walls to play bowls, 'fixing it as a rule, that instead of exacting money, the winners should oblige the losers to recite some short prayers by way of suffrage for the souls in purgatory!'

A Society of the Friends of Italy is being organised in London, whose threefold objects have been thus stated:—1. By public meetings, lectures, pamphlets, and the press—and especially by affording opportunities to the most competent authorities for the publication of standard works on the history of the Italian national movement—to provide materials for a correct public appreciation of the Italian question in this country. 2. To promote the same object, on fitting occasions, in parliament. 3. And generally to aid, in this country, the cause of the Independence, the Unity, and the Political, Religious, and Commercial Liberty of Italy.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## THE LANCASTER CONTROVERSY.

THE REV. MR. FLEMING'S FIRST LETTER: A REVIEW OF MR. HOLYOAKE'S RECENT LECTURES.

IN reviewing and replying to Mr. Holyoake's recent lectures, I have no intention of considering every objection he urged against Christianity, and every argument he brought forward in support of infidelity. This I should not have done even in public discussion, when a much greater opportunity of doing so would have been had. It is with the *salient* points of the lectures only that I purpose dealing in this critique—with what apparently was of importance in the lecturer's own estimation, and what might possibly appear to some of the audience not to be destitute of force.

As a lecturer, Mr. Holyoake possesses excellences which at once place him on vantage ground with many of his auditors. His appearance, voice, fluency of speech, and earnestness of manner, are all greatly in his favour, and immediately secure for him the attention of those whom he addresses. He appears a thoughtful, earnest, and somewhat melancholy man, fully given to his mission as the modern apostle of atheism, and determined to embrace every opportunity of announcing and diffusing his sentiments, whether success attends his efforts or not. His mind is evidently wholly engrossed with the subject of his advocacy, and for it he apparently lives, and seems prepared to encounter every inconvenience and sacrifice to secure for it a wider dissemination among his fellow countrymen, and throughout the earth.

That Mr. Holyoake's recent lectures were a fair specimen of his lectures generally, and the objections he urged against Christianity a fair sample of those he usually adduces, may, I think, be warrantably concluded. They certainly embraced the substance of his writings, as far as I know. My belief then is, that he said as much against Christianity, and in behalf of atheism, as he could, during the period comprised by the delivery of his lectures. But that that was very little is, as far as I can learn, the general opinion of those who listened to him. This certainly is my own belief; and I, therefore, *cannot avoid the impression that Mr. H.'s visit to the town has been productive of great and lasting good. It has shown to us the hollowness of infidelity*—how little can be brought forward in support of atheism, and against Christianity. And this is surely a matter for congratulation. For myself it is so especially, after the fears that were entertained and expressed by so many relative to the issue of Mr. H.'s lectures. It is my honest belief that infidelity has not gained a single adherent by this effort; but that, on the contrary, not a few who formerly were predisposed to embrace its principles, have been led to pause and to inquire afresh into the character of the pretensions they were about to support. This much, as to the issues of the lectures, I have thought it well at once to advance for the sake of any who may still indulge the idea that great evil

has come from them. Of Mr. H.'s inconsistency and unfairness, as the advocate of certain opinions, and the avowed opponent of Christianity, I somewhat complained at the close of his second and third lectures; and to these I again advert. He holds it as an axiom or first principle, that the opinions men honestly hold, and which they believe to be calculated to promote the well-being of men, and the good order of society, they ought to have the privilege of disseminating wheresoever and whensoever they please, without hindrance or interruption. Yet this rule which Mr. H. lays down for others, to which he professes to attach the highest importance, and for which he pleads most earnestly, he does not himself observe. He disregarded it once and again during the three nights of his lectures in Lancaster. This he did most glaringly in the complaint which he made of the delivery of tracts against infidelity to those who entered the hall to hear his lectures. Those tracts contained, in the judgment of those who circulated them, *nothing but truth—instructive, important, and practical truth*; and in the act of distributing them, they ought not, according to Mr. H.'s principles, to have been interfered with, or complained of, and least of all by Mr. H. himself. But here Mr. H. clearly showed that he was not prepared to concede to others what he demanded as a right for himself. Those who complain of the *intolerance* of others, ought not themselves to evince it or to practise it. If Mr. H. considered the tracts to contain what was untrue, his duty was to *demonstrate* their falsity, and not to condemn their distribution, or *merely assert* that they misrepresented infidelity. But he did neither.

But this was not the only violation of his own axioms, of which Mr. H. was guilty. There were others equally glaring. But reference to one more only must here suffice. He adopts it as a principle, that no doctrine can be regarded as an established and settled truth, which has not been universally discussed and universally received. Yet he holds himself many doctrines, and I have no doubt sincerely, which have never been so discussed and received. Nay more, he holds and maintains as true, opinions which have received comparatively little discussion, and been adopted by few; whilst he rejects as altogether false, opinions which have received the widest discussion, and been embraced as irresistibly and demonstrably true by hundreds of thousands of the most enlightened of mankind. Now, what but culpable inconsistency is this? Why does Mr. H. adopt principles and violate them at every step? Let him adhere to his own standard of appeal for deciding what is true and what is false—what is deserving of our credence and what is not so, and he cannot continue any longer what he is—the adversary of Christianity, and the advocate of atheism. The doctrine of the Divine existence has been all but universally discussed, and universally received; yet Mr. H. regards it as wholly unworthy of any intelligent man's approval and belief. Atheism has been little discussed, and adopted by the most insignificant number; but he nevertheless accepts it and advocates it.

Then I have also to complain of Mr. H.'s *unfairness*. He does not deal honestly with the questions he undertakes to discuss. What he *professes* to object to is Christianity, but what he *actually* opposes are the opinions and practices of men. The weapons he employs he draws not from the armoury of the Gospel, but from the quivers of men. What he charges home upon Christianity, is properly only chargeable on the statements and conduct—the books and systems of those who profess it. Now of this I complain—and I think with justice. If Christianity is to be opposed, let it be the Christianity we receive, and not that we know nothing of—the Christianity of the New Testament, and not that of men's writings and

lives—the Christianity which stands before the world as God's revelation, and not that which is of the earth and earthy. That, however, Mr. H. seems not to venture to assail. Its impregnableness he has probably discovered. But be that as it may, all that I ask for is, that when Christians are charged with adhering to a religious system that is objectionable and untenable, let it be demonstrated from the Bible itself, and on fair grounds of reasoning, that such is the case.

Mr. H. takes credit to himself for being an atheist. He maintains that if there were sufficient evidence for the doctrine of the Divine existence, and the truth of Christianity, he could not prevent himself being a believer in both—for, that 'the understanding is the subject of evidence,' and 'is moved by evidence.' But does the conclusion fairly follow the premises? What drunkard is not convinced of the evil of intemperance, and the dutifulness of sobriety? But all drunkards do not follow their convictions. The same may be said of burglars, and thieves, and sensualists, and multitudes of others. The doctrine of Mr. H. is contradicted by innumerable facts from day to day. Men are not solely under the guidance of their understandings. There are other authorities which they acknowledge, and to which they render obedience. Before they can be induced to change the objects of their pursuit, to live for new and different ends from what they have previously followed, and alter the whole course of their conduct, their *heart* must be influenced as well as their understanding. Men can resist evidence, close their eyes to proofs, and act contrary to what is most plainly their duty. This they frequently do. Moreover men may warp their judgments, blunt their perceptive faculty, and disqualify themselves for the reception of evidence, by the prosecution of a wrong course. In that case the deficiency of which they complain is not in the evidence presented to them, but in their own injured capacities?

Mr. H. says the differences among Christians involve infidelity. How so? Are all infidels of one heart and mind? Then do the differences among infidels involve the truth of Christianity? Do the differences of atheists imply Theism? Or the differences of Socialists the opposite doctrine? Mr. H. won't say anything of the kind. Then of what value is his argument?

Nature, in the opinion of Mr. H., is self-existent and eternal. This is a first and cardinal doctrine with him. He frequently refers to it in his writings, and as often introduces it in his lectures. Yet he supplies no proof of its truthfulness—makes no attempt at demonstration—adduces not even a solitary illustration. He merely asserts it; and under the form of a bare assertion leaves it. But thus no intelligent man will be satisfied. Mr. H.'s *ipse dixit* is not sufficient; until rigid arguments, irresistible proof, overwhelming evidence are adduced, the assertion that the world is self-existent and eternal will go for nothing, and be treated by thinking men as it deserves. The general belief of mankind, the discoveries of geology, the histories of nations, the recent date of existing arts, and the perpetual changes that are going on in the world around us, all go to show that neither man nor nature has existed for ever. And then what shall we say of the disposition of the material of the world, and of its universal harmonies and adaptations? The world could not make itself. It possesses no intelligence; yet the impress of the highest conceivable intelligence is everywhere exhibited by it. As has been well said, 'The Crystal Palace is the embodiment of an idea conceived and perfected in a personal intelligence. It has been constituted by rule and compass, measure and weight, and according to the suggestions of wisdom and skill. All the variety of its extraordinary contents bear the impress of thought and purpose; design and contrivance, faculty and power; but no one confounds the work

with the workmen, or imagines that the skill impressed on the productions is something inherent in the productions themselves, or that they have sprung, by necessity, from the impulse or operation of unintelligent force! Any one who saw the apparently confused and chaotic jumble of coarse packages and unarranged materials, as they lay about the building, previous to being put into harmonious order, could never have imagined that they had, in themselves, any tendency to take the places and assume the appearances to which they were destined, independently of the mind, the thought, plan, reason, and ability of the person or persons by whom all was to be effected. Even if it had been possible to conceive such a thing—to conceive, namely, that they should, without the immediate agency of hands, have gradually arranged themselves into beautiful groups, and that *thus* confusion was to be succeeded by order—this would only have been regarded as the result of processes to which they had been subjected by human sagacity, and as the proof of profounder and more wonderful contrivance on the part of the presiding genius of the scene. Instead of tempting a thoughtful observer to confound and identify the thing done with the actual doer—or to lose sight of him, and attribute all to necessity or chance, or to some mysterious appetencies in the things themselves—it would only have carried the idea of personality further back, and have augmented his admiration of the attributes that distinguished it. In the same way, adhering to the truth that the heavens and the earth are an actual creation, then, whatever may have been the processes through which they gradually passed till the whole fabric was developed and perfected, *all was the work of a personal agent, distinct from the actual universe itself*, and all that was done was accomplished through the action of those laws which *he* framed—to which he subjected them—which he administered—which the things did not originate—which they could not understand, and from which they could not escape. *He*—the living, spiritual, personal God—was the Mover and Maker, the Designer and Doer from first to last.

JAMES FLEMING.

#### MR. HOLYOAKE'S REPLY TO MR. FLEMING'S FIRST LETTER.

*To the Editor of the Lancaster Guardian.*

SIR,—As the Rev. Mr. Fleming has closed his review of my recent lectures in Lancaster (which review I have read with interest), some explanation is due to that gentleman on points which he has failed to conceive accurately, and which he doubtless desires shall be stated fairly; and the newspaper public (now the matter has been submitted to them) will consider themselves entitled to hear both sides of a question upon which they are appealed to for a verdict. In complying with this expectation I shall, however, be brief. If indeed I wrote at greater length than Mr. Fleming I might stand excused. On my adversary's side is the prejudice of the age—the willing ear of the influential—the cry of the multitude and the sanction of the law: to which I have to oppose an advocacy which persecution has made ambiguous, calumny unpopular, and bigotry dangerous. My appeal also in this case is to an audience of which few have examined the question, and none dare declare their conviction. But I shall for other reasons attempt no lengthy answer. You, sir, (the Editor of the *Lancaster Guardian*), have before admitted communications on my behalf. The customs of this country are adverse to hearing any but the religious advocate in the newspapers, and I am anxious not to trespass on impartiality so unusual as that which you have manifested. It is certainly some abatement of any further apprehension I might feel to find myself



in so fair a way of being acceptable where I had little reason to expect it. Mr. Fleming is so impressed that what I have said already 'has been productive of great and lasting good,' that I shall not be surprised, on another visit, should he offer me the use of his own chapel, as he cannot himself hope to do more than accomplish 'great and lasting good' by his happiest ministration.

This gentleman represents me as complaining of the delivery of certain tracts at my lectures, which the deliverers believed to contain nothing but the 'truth,' and of which I did not demonstrate the falsity—and on these accounts Mr. Fleming brings against me the threefold charge of 'inconsistency, unfairness, and intolerance.' One of the tracts delivered at the doors of my lecture room represented all infidels, and me by implication, as 'men who lie in wait to *deceive*, who are bent on ruining the present peace and future prospects of mankind, and promise men liberty while they themselves are the servants of *corruption*,' and much else equally rude—setting the example of bad taste, bad spirit, and bad manners. Why should I disprove the falsity of that of which the falsity was evident, especially as Mr. Fleming did not say, and has not said, and will not, I think, attempt to say, one word in their justification? If I objected to them, it was because under the circumstances they were no part of free discussion—they were a calumny and an intimidation. But my Reverend Reviewer declares that according to my principles I ought not to have complained of the delivery of these tracts, an instance of how little Mr. Fleming knows of my principles. Certainly it is an axiom with me that every man has a moral right to circulate what he believes to be true; and he has a right also to take the consequence if he circulates what is false. I have never maintained that the libeller is entitled to public applause because he is a conscientious libeller. The only freedom we ever demanded of the British Government has been that speculative opinion should be left free, subject only, when bad, to the chastisement of better opinion. My demand has been that opinion, whether right or wrong, whether foul or fair, should not be visited by legal penalties, but left entirely to the moral penalties of public reprobation. It is evident, therefore, that in visiting those Tracts with reprobation, I was acting in strict accordance with a long-avowed, healthy, self-sustaining, self-defensive principle. Mr. Fleming argues as though every man who is the advocate of freedom of opinion is in consequence disqualified from protesting against its abuse. This is the logic which would sap the strength of the friends of a wise liberty, and inflate the pretensions of tyranny. Not to fall in with this is, in Mr. Fleming's eyes, 'inconsistency, unfairness, and intolerance.'

Considering the strange medley of opinions Mr. Fleming has collected together and ascribed to me, it must be owing either to his charity or the latent state of his ingenuity that he has not made me appear ridiculous. Because I (following the theory of Bailey) explained that no doctrine could be considered as established unless universally discussed and accepted, Mr. Fleming represents me as holding that no doctrine, of any other order, is to be believed. If this were my view I should create an immense difficulty in the way of any new opinion being believed; for if we must wait for the whole world to examine and accept it first, we shall have to wait a considerable time. Whereas my argument was, that though we might believe our opinions true upon individual examination, we could not consider them in the light of *established* truths (neither I mine, nor Mr. Fleming his) until they had won universal assent in the arena of free and universal discussion—an ordeal which helps to guarantee their absolute truth—an ordeal to which all opinions involving the risk of a future life ought to be submitted, as a matter of self-defence.

Mr. Fleming, never averse to imputation, declares I 'do not deal *honestly*' with Christianity—that I oppose the systems of men as that of the New Testament. You will be surprised, Mr. Editor, to learn that I took the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to be the central fact of the Christian system—that Christ died to take away the sins of the world, that it was necessary for Christ to die to save us from the wrath to come. Does Mr. Fleming deny this to be Christianity? If he does, will he be good enough to tell me what it is that he preaches as Christianity, when the Son of God and his death on Calvary, and sin against Heaven and the wrath to come, are taken away? These were the doctrines to which I had the painful task of objecting, and if these were not an honest selection let Mr. Fleming name one, and I will endeavour to meet his views.

True, I said that if sufficient evidence (to me) of the Divine existence was placed before me, the law of the human understanding was such that I must believe. Mr. Fleming thinks himself called upon to refute this truism, and he attempts by asking 'What drunkard is not convinced of the evil of intemperance? but all drunkards do not follow their convictions.' But the question is not 'what do drunkards follow;' (I would rather Mr. Fleming adopted sober illustrations,) but what do drunkards *believe*? Will Mr. Fleming tell us that while a drunkard is *convinced* of the evil of intemperance, that he does not *believe* in the evil of intemperance? What makes drunkards follow drunkenness, though convinced of its evil, is a question of *conduct* which I have no objection to discuss, but it has nothing to do with the present question of *belief*.

In what way 'differences among Christians involve infidelity,' which Mr. Fleming says I alleged, I know not. I therefore pass by that passage, which eludes both my recollection and my understanding.

Grounds for believing in the self-existence and eternity of Nature, which Mr. Fleming appears to ask for, may be stated thus. Nature is something. Whence could it have come? Out of nothing? We cannot understand that—we cannot conceive it. We rather conclude that it is self-existent. And what could never have begun to be, must always have been, hence the self-existent appears to be also eternal. Mr. Fleming's account of this matter doubtless appears simple to him, but to me it presents insuperable difficulties. The end of controversy is the explanation of our mutual views. It is the part of the public to judge between us.

That Nature which has the majestic attribute of self-existence, has doubtless the lesser attribute of self-action. The theory of Nature which I hold teaches me to see and to own its inherent sublimity and wondrous manifestations. The theory of Mr. Fleming degrades it into a mere instrument, and God into a handicraftsman—into some indefinite Mr. Paxton, the fabricator of a Universal Conservatory. A writer, certainly not to be suspected of partiality to atheism, has described the idea of Mr. Fleming's elaborate paragraph upon the Crystal Palace as turning upon 'the whole current hypothesis of the Universal being a machine, and then of an Architect, who constructed it, sitting as it were apart and guiding it, and *seeing* it go—which may turn out an inanity and nonentity, not much longer tenable; with which result we shall in the quietest manner reconcile ourselves. Our Natural Theologies may, in reference to the strange season they appear in, have a certain value, and be worth printing and reprinting, only let us understand *for whom*, and how, they are valuable, and be in no wise wroth with the atheist, whom they have not convinced, and could not, and *should* not convince.\*

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

\* Carlyle's Miscellanies, p. 321, vol. iv.; Art. Diderot.

## Beldagon Church.

BY ERNEST CHARLES JONES.

[FOR some time past Mr. Ernest Jones has been issuing 'Poems and Notes to the People.' On looking over the first four numbers we were attracted by the great beauty of the 'Beldagon Church.' Other poems in these four numbers are more admired—the 'New World' for its political sentiments, the 'Painter of Florence' for the finish of some passages. The death of the Painter is indeed a masterly sketch. We select 'Beldagon Church,' because of its subject; but our admiration is not founded upon that, but upon the intrinsic beauty of the poem. It abounds in passages of poetic beauty, delicate appreciation of Nature, eloquence, contrast, and wit. The quotation of it below is much abridged, in order to present the whole picture in our available space; yet we have retained the passages of adoration and pantheistic recognition of God in Nature, which contain more power and feeling than six cantos rolled into one by the Rev. 'Satan' Montgomery, whose praise is in all the churches. The reader will find Mr. Jones's poem more effective in its original fulness. We italicise passages which the author would not be supposed capable of writing; indeed, his talent is so various, and his performances so unequal, that those who do not take the trouble to study him in various aspects will form a very inadequate estimate of him. No political objection, save a qualified one, can now lie against Mr. Jones—any other will sure to be erroneous and unjust; for he manifests such various talent, that he astonishes you as much by his wisdom as by his extravagance, as his political advice in his 'Notes for the People' shows. Nor are the poems of equal merit. Any man who writes poems *weekly* will be sure to write bad ones sometimes, but the power to write a good one is so rare that men take note of it. We question whether any poem of greater beauty on the whole than Beldagon Church has appeared for a long time; and in such an unpretending way such a poem was never presented, it being but the fourth part of one weekly twopenny number of 'Poems and Notes for the People.']

## I. THE WALK TO CHURCH.

Loud the lofty belfry rung,  
Wide the massy portal swung—  
For Beldagon's Cathedral-fane  
A proud Assembly sought again.  
High the fields are waving;  
Orchard fruit is blest—  
Summer's merry saving  
For winter's happy rest.  
O'er the clover lea  
The blossom-loving bee,  
Neglectful of her Maker  
Tho' 'tis Sunday-morn,  
*Little Sabbath-breaker!*  
Winds her humming horn.  
Bell and book unheeding,  
The quiet kine are feeding,  
The birds are on the wing,  
The pebbled runnels ring,  
The rivers still are flowing,  
The graceful corn is growing,  
The frolic wind is blowing—  
And yet, the world caressing,  
Unwrinkled by a frown,  
The blue sky sends a blessing  
On all creation down.

In Beldagon's cathedral-fane,  
From tesselled floor to gilded vane  
Hangs that deep, sepulchral gloom  
That turns a church into a tomb.  
Marble mourners coldly weep!  
Graves are for a pavement spread;  
A stifling air is overhead:  
'Tis not the home of those who sleep,  
It is a prison for the dead!

But ere you pass yon portal, stay!  
The bells have yet a space to chime—  
Then let them toll their sullen rhyme,  
And come away awhile with me  
To harvest-field and clover lea;  
Sit by Nature's side, and pray,  
And join her service for the day:  
Every whispering leaf's a preacher,  
Every daisy is a teacher,  
Writing on the unsullied sod  
Revelation straight from God.  
Then, while yon solemn belfry swings,  
List how Earth her matin sings,  
We shall return in time to hear  
How Saints adore and sinners fear.

## 2. THE RITUAL OF NATURE.

Mistily, dreamily steals a faint glimmer—  
Hill-tops grow lighter, though stars become  
dimmer:

First a streak of grey;  
Then a line of green;  
Then a sea of roses  
With golden isles between.

All along the dawn-lit prairies  
*Stand the flowers, like tip-toe fairies,*

Waiting for the early dew:

Listening—  
Glistening—

As the morning  
Walks their airy muster thro',  
All the new-born blossoms christening  
With a sacrament of dew.

See! a shadow moves  
Down the mountain furl'd:  
It is a thin grey shadow—  
Yet it moves the world.

For hist ye! list ye! what is gliding  
Where the trail is newly laid?

In the herbage hiding,  
Thro' the bushes sliding,  
With the moving shadow?

Crowds of timid things,  
Paws, and feet, and wings,  
All thro' the boughs and bushy glade,  
And o'er the clover meadow.

There they pass  
Through the grass,  
And the shaken  
Drops awaken  
Lines of light  
On their flight;

And there  
The hare,  
With head erect

And ears bent over,  
Peers around

Above the clover,  
From the mound  
The mole has made,  
To detect  
An ambuscade.

And gaze aloft, where riven  
Thro' the parted heaven,

Cleaves a snowy stream;  
Between its cloudy shores

A towering eagle soars  
To bathe in the first sunbeam,  
And comes back to the mountain's dun  
*To tell them he has seen the sun.*

Then the skies grow bold;  
Fast the day mounts high;  
Forth, in cloudless glory,  
Bursts the flashing fire!  
And where the warm rays quiver  
On pool, and rill, and river—

Whirling, twirling,  
Upward curling,  
Vapoury columns, music rife,  
Meeting, parting,  
Backward darting—  
Swarms the merry insect life.

Lone, the chanticleer  
Crew reveillee long;  
'Tis now his turn to hear  
The world awake to song.  
The flower that sings  
As the sunlight clings  
*On the petal with finger of gold;*  
And the forest—that harp of a mil-  
lion strings,  
*And æolian melodies old!*

While the voice of the springs  
In the mountain rings  
The great key-note of the main,  
And the light cloud flings  
From its shadowy wings  
The laugh of the dancing rain.

Then the birds all pause  
On the blossoming shaws  
As the drop on the branch they hear,  
And the thunder, that awes,  
Like a giant's applause,  
The song it was given to cheer.

And the labourer's lay  
Is enlivening day,  
And the shepherd boy answering wild;  
And the young at their play  
In the new-mown hay, [child;  
And the mother's sweet song to her

As if nature, intent  
To surpass all she lent  
In the breath of the rose and the coo  
of the dove, [verse sent  
To crown the great hymn of the uni-  
HUMAN LOVE.

While wanton luxury's saintly child  
Sleeps off the nights debauches wild,  
When fields are dew and skies are balm  
Thus nature sings her morning psalm.

And a spirit glides before me,  
Pointing all the moral true;  
Oh, my God, how I adore thee  
When I walk thy wonders thro'—  
Learning Spring's romantic story,  
Or the Summer's tale of glory,  
Or the Autumn's legend hoary,  
Old as earth, yet ever new.

Nor is it sadder when the Winter  
Lays his hand, tho' wet and cold,  
On bough and blossom, grass and mould,  
Saying, in his breathings deep—  
Mortal, rest! and Nature, sleep!  
But unto nought that liveth, weep.

For ever the loving hand of Heaven  
 Heals the wound that man has given ;  
 Reptile, bird, and beast of prey  
 From half the world are swept away—  
 Those who took the taint, decay.  
 And ever the stream of Truth is flowing ;  
 And ever the seed of Peace is growing ;  
 And ever a voice is stealing,  
 The gospel of Love revealing ;  
 Flower and mountain, wave and wind  
 Say—God is good ; and God is kind ;  
 He frowns at fear, and grief, and care,  
 And man's worst blasphemy, despair.  
 For joy is praise, and peace is prayer,  
 And Heaven is near, and Earth is bright,  
 And God is Love, and Life, and Light.

Now the wind is slow subsiding ;  
 On the boughs the birds are hiding ;  
 The herds are standing by the stream ;  
 The notes are pausing on the beam ;  
 As tho' they heard the noontide say,  
 With hushing glory, ' Let us pray.'  
 And, hark ! the booming bells give o'er ;  
 Then back to Beldagon once more.

### 3. THE SERVICE.

In the churchyard's elmen shade  
 Glittering chariots stand arrayed ;  
 The coachmen on the boxes nod ;  
 The horses paw the sacred sod ;  
 And round the porch are laughing loud  
 The lounging lacqueys' liveried crowd.  
 But now behold we are within,  
 Safe from sunshine and from sin.

Silks have rustled, fans have fluttered—  
 Sneers and compliments been uttered ;  
 And many found, as find they ought,  
 In church the object that they sought :  
 Business finds a turn in trade ;  
 Praise, its victim ; wit, its butt ;  
 New acquaintance have been made,  
 Old acquaintance have been cut.

Now the congregation's seated,  
 And the church is growing heated  
 With a heavy, perfumed air  
 Of scents, and salts, and vinegar.  
 The morning prayers are ending—  
 The psalmody's ascending ;  
 The great men, lowly bending,  
 Turn their gilded leaves about,  
 Most ostentatiously devout.

Then, like the flutter of a full pit  
 When a favourite passage comes,  
 As the Bishop mounts his pulpit  
 Sink the whispers, coughs, and hums,  
 And, here and there, a scattered sinner,  
 Rising in the House of God,  
 Shows he  
 Knows the

Rosy,  
 Cosy,  
 Dossy,  
 Prosy

Bishop, with a smile and nod.

The Prelate bows his cushioned knee :  
 Oh, the Prelate's fat to see ;  
 Fat the priests who minister,  
 Fat each roaring chorister,  
 Prebendary, Deacon, Lector,  
 Chapter, Chanter, Vicar, Rector,  
 Curate, Chaplain, Dean, and Pastor,  
 Verger, Sexton, Clerk, Schoolmaster—  
 From mitre tall to gold-laced hat  
 Fat's the place, and all are fat.

The bishop rises from his knee,  
 And thus begins his homily :—

#### THE BISHOP OF BELDAGON'S SERMON.

Sink and tremble, wretched sinners ; the  
 Almighty Lord has hurled  
 His curse for everlasting on a lost and  
 guilty world !

Upon the ground beneath your feet ; upon  
 the sky above your head ;  
 Upon the womb that brings you forth ; upon  
 the toil that gives you bread !

On all that lives, and breathes, and moves,  
 in earth, and air, and wave ;  
 On all that feels, and dreams, and thinks :  
 on cradle, house, and grave.

For Adam murdered innocence,—and since  
 the world became its hearse,  
 Throughout the living sphere extending  
 breeds and spreads the dreadful curse.

Nay ! Beside all certain scourges, dreader  
 evils rise as well :  
 Plague, and war, and famine sweep their  
 countless victims down to Hell !

All for special sin commissioned, as the Al-  
 mighty rod was held  
 Over Europe's insnrrections when its sa-  
 vages rebelled.

Ha ! How they rotted ! How they perished !  
 Myriads stricken, day by day !  
 Rebels yielded—men submitted—and the  
 wrath was turned away.

Brethren ! profit by the lesson ! see the hand  
 that's stretching down  
 To shield the woosack, counter, ledger,  
 altar, mitre, sabre, crown !

Then be patient in Affliction ! envy not the  
 rich and great !  
 'A contrite and a broken heart' alone shall  
 enter at the gate.

You may think the rich are happy, but you  
 little know the cost :  
 By the gain of earthly treasures are eternal  
 treasures lost.

For this life is short and fleeting, and they  
 choose a poorer share ;

Let them revel—let them triumph: they  
shall suffer doubly there.

Your afflictions are your blessings; bydis-  
aster you are tried;

Those are happiest who are saddest, if the  
searching test they bide.

Tears are gladder far than smiles; disease  
is healthier far than health;

Rags are warmer far than ermine; want is  
richer far than wealth;

Hunger feeds you more than plenty; strife  
is peace and peace is strife;

Loss is gain and gain is loss; life is death  
and death is life.

Check the proud repining spirit—bare the  
back and kiss the rod;

Humbled, crushed, and broken-hearted is  
the state that pleases God.

Listen not to idle schemers, pointing to  
utopian goals;

Yours is more than work enough to save  
your miserable souls.

Dream not of amelioration; future ages  
still shall nurse

In their breast the ancient serpent, the ir-  
revocable curse.

'Tis writ, 'I came to bring a sword.' 'Tis  
writ, 'The poor shall never cease.'

'Tis blasphemy to talk of plenty, heresy to  
think of peace!

By nature you are all corrupt, and doomed,  
and damned, and lost in sin;

Each natural thought, each natural wish  
is searching Satan's lure within!

And, to crown the gloomy prospect, should  
a single hope aspire,

Hangs o'er all the Day of Judgment with  
its world-destroying fire!

The bishop bows with reverence bland,  
And leans his head upon his hand;  
Then up the aisles and arches dim,  
Peals the deep resounding hymn:—

THE BISHOP OF BELDAGON'S HYMN.

The heart's a black pollution;  
Pest is in the breath;  
Each limb's a dark conspirator,  
Compassing our death;

The mind's a moral ulcer;  
The veins with venom roll;  
And life is one great treason  
Of sense against the soul.

A subtle fiend is lurking  
In land, and air, and wave;  
The very ground beneath you  
Is but an open grave;

For Earth's a brittle casing  
O'er the raging fires of Hell,  
Breaking in at every footstep  
Since our father Adam fell.

In every bird that carols,  
In every flower that blows,  
In every fruit that ripens  
Behold your secret foes.

In every hour and moment,  
In every pulse that fliea,  
In every breath and accent  
The flames of hell arise.

Throughout the night, the Devil  
Sits whispering at your ear:  
Your dreams are all his prompting,  
Your prayers are all his fear.

Let tears bedew your pillow,  
And tremble as you sleep;  
Arise next morn in sorrow,  
And work, and watch, and weep.

For every word you utter,  
For every deed you do,  
Hell fire for everlasting  
May rack you through and through.

All science, song, and music,  
And poetry, and art,  
Are Satan's foul devices  
To snare the sinner's heart.

In books there lurks a danger  
That's hardly understood;  
The best are scarcely harmless,  
And none of them are good.

Religion takes for granted;  
Faith never murmurs 'why?'  
To think, is to be tempted;  
To reason, is to die!

Behold a mask in friendship,  
The Tempter's face to hide;  
A pagod in Affection;  
And Hell on every side.

The blood of Christ, atoning,  
Might wash your sin away;  
But, that you've won salvation,  
No mortal tongue can say.

For, when you've done your utmost,  
Small glimpse of hope is there:  
Then, sinner! on thy death-bed,  
Sink, tremble, and despair!

The Bishop now indulges in  
A spiritual fiction,  
And from the hand that holds a curse  
He pours a benediction.

The blessing's o'er—the rites are done,  
The organ wails its last;  
And from the Church of Beldagon  
The crowd are flitting fast.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## THE EDITOR MISTAKETH CHRISTIANITY.

SIR,—For a long time past I have been a reader of your *Reasoner*, and however much I differ from your conclusions, I cannot but admire your freedom of thought, boldness of expression, and independence of action. With the sentiment embodied in your motto I cordially agree, and I think that a person who acts up to it so well as yourself will willingly receive a communication from one who fears that you sometimes mistake your position, and confound the thing called Christianity with the sayings, teachings, and actions of Christ.

I conceive your abilities are misapplied. In attempting to destroy Christianity you must remember you are destroying all the goodness and virtue that it embraces, as well as its supposed evils. I believe in God and in Christ, but my belief in both I consider to be as much founded in reason as your disbelief. Instinct, and all but universal assent, proclaim the great First Cause; and an opinion so widely, deeply, and long assented to, has its foundation in a truth that cannot be safely ignored.

You, as well as myself, know that orthodoxy is not Christianity, and that it is not fair to confound the monstrosities of mankind with the eternal truth of God. Infidelity is preferable to devils, hell fire, and a God dooming the vast majority of his creatures to eternal torment. But every thing must be viewed divested of its accidents and corruptions, and if we take the teachings and spirit of Christ, we shall find that they sanction neither ancient mummeries nor modern absurdities. According to him love is the essence of religion, and the test by which the good man must be known.

Catholicism is not consistent Christianity. It is consistent orthodoxy. Were I not a rationalist I should be a Catholic, for I see no medium, any more than Newman can, between the absolute right of private judgment and absolute dependence on authority. Were Evangelicals true to their own professions of belief in the depravity of nature, the wickedness of reason, the doctrine of the Trinity, &c., they would at once join the Church of Rome. But Protestants have enough of private judgment to prevent the climax of absurdity. They stop half way to the Pope, and by and by when they perceive the consequences of their own dogmas they will retrace their steps, and view him whom they worship divested of all those qualities which are more provocative of hatred than affection.

What your moral objections to Christianity can be I cannot conceive. The spirit of all Christ's teachings is pure and heavenly. If your opinions are formed by what is said of Christ, then your moral objections must exist in great abundance. But Christ never wrote any thing for posterity, nor commanded any thing to be written, but he left behind him an influence and spirit that admits of eternal progress, and modifies all external institutions. Paul, a man inferior only to his master in the utterance of all-embracing truths, says—'He was made a minister of the New Testament not of the letter but of the spirit, for the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life.' If you judge of Christianity by the letter, then it is an absurdity; but if you judge of it by its spirit, then it includes every principle of virtue and happiness.

I am often surprised at the frivolous nature of the charge brought against Christ. The other day, in your *Reasoner*, a writer condemned him because he is reported to have said 'I come not to send peace but a sword' (Mat. x., 32.) Now

it is evident to the most superficial observer that Christ here refers to the convulsions and animosities excited by new opinions, whether true or false. In all history there is no fact more evident, than that the promulgation of good 'sets people together by the ears,' and produces for a time a state of anarchy, confusion, and disaster, quite foreign to the ultimate effect. Christ simply utters an established fact, a natural law, a law that you have yourself exemplified, acknowledged, and enforced.

I fear to encroach too much on your time and space. I will say in conclusion that I hope you and your fellow workers will judge the Bible and Christ in the same impartial manner that you form opinions of other documents and characters. Look on the Bible as a history of mind—as a book containing what people thought of Deity. No one can entirely divest himself of the character of the age in which he lives. But moral truths depend, for their authority, not on any amount of evidence, and what book is so full of these as the Bible. In it, all moral sayings and discoveries have been anticipated. And what character stands out like that of Christ's? If such a being were met with in Grecian or Roman history he would be the constant object of laudation. Then why refuse him his just meed of praise and reverence because his followers have deified him, put into his mouth words that he never spoke, attributed to him actions that he never performed, and made him responsible for all the miserable sophistries and dogmas which they have invented?

Southampton.

HENRY NORRINGTON.

[Some answer is due to this correspondent, especially as he writes to us for the first time. Would 'Undecimus,' or 'William Chilton' answer for the editor, who is at this time too fully engaged?—Ed.]

#### CURRENT PUBLICATIONS.

EVERY month brings with it the *English Republic*. Nos. 5, 6, and 7, for May, June, and July, have duly appeared. If they contained no more than the pieces from the writings of Mazzini, they furnish contributions to the literature of progress not otherwise accessible to the English reader—and for this Mr. Linton deserves our thanks, if for nought else. Besides, there are excellent things of his own, containing a quality of practical earnestness not evident in the same degree in other political writers. Then his exquisite ascetism of comment on Chartist proceedings is not to be lightly enjoyed. At present republicanism is counted a somewhat superfluous advocacy; but it is the only logically-consistent one among democratic advocates, and will come into wider favour yet. The last number contains a series of epitaphs, from which we extract two specimens of Mr. Linton's mode of commemorating the politically dead. The first is 'For a Small Column in Memory of the affliction of M. Thiers:—'

'Thiers has had a cancer on his tongue.  
No wonder! Would you know the reason why?  
When pimples have from trivial falsehoods sprung,  
What must he have whose whole life is a lie?'

The second epitaph is intended to stand 'In the Jesuits' Burial Ground:—'

'A murderer to the very bone—  
A traitor to the marrow—  
Cain and Iscariot both in one:  
Here lies Odillon Barrot.'



In the *Zoist* for July we find a quotation from the *Lancet*, of February 8th, ult., which states that 'Mdlle. Julie de B—— practises mesmerism extensively, and we are told successfully, upon Sir Benjamin Hall, Bart., the M. P. for Marylebone, whose confidence in the profession we recommend the medical electors of Marylebone to remember when he next solicits their sweet voices at an election.' A more extraordinary passage than this we never read in a clerical journal. If a member of parliament is ill, is he to be denied the privilege of selecting his own mode of cure, under the penalty of losing his seat? It is the same thing as disqualifying the member because he goes to a dissenting chapel. What would Mr. Wakley say if the electors of Finsbury were called upon to reject him because he did not go to a hydropathic establishment the last time he was ill? The *Zoist* for this quarter is rich in exposures of this species of medical bigotry. The *Nonconformist*, of June 25th, ult., contains a tribute to Dr. Elliotson, and a gratifying recognition of the science of magnetism, thus expressed:—'It would suffice to redeem any opinion on natural phenomena from contempt, that Reichenbach and Dr. Gregory gave it the authority of their names, and sustained it by generalised results of careful experiments. We cannot think that these men will have the fate of that man of highly-cultivated and philosophic mind, Dr. Elliotson, who has borne the obloquy and opposition incident to his professional study and employment of magnetism, with the dignity and self-respect truly becoming a scientific man in possession of a truth too refined and advanced for the immediate adoption of the age.'

A *Refugee Circular* is published by Melsom, of Liverpool, at 1d. It contains prayers and articles by refugees, addresses by friends, and acknowledgments of subscriptions. The introduction to the article in No. 2 contains these words:—'So much misrepresentation exists in the country respecting the conditions on which the refugees left Turkey, (occasioned by the falsehoods so industriously circulated by a portion of the Liverpool press, that we deem it advisable to reprint Major Wolynski's "Answer to the article which appeared in the *Liverpool Mercury*, of March 7th, 1851.'" The words we have put in parentheses had been better omitted. Sympathising fully with the object of the *Circular*, we would have it as effective as possible. Correct every error, but in a foreign advocacy be neutral to those who make it.

*Apropos* to Melsom's publications, we may observe, that Counsellor Ironside, of Sheffield, who for many years has refused to vote, has resumed that duty. This desirable change in his notions has been brought about by the letters on 'Direct Legislation,' by M. Rittinghausen, reviewed p. 423 in our last volume, published by Melsom.

The same publisher has brought out another useful translation by Victor Considerant, entitled 'The Difficulty Solved; or, the Government of the People by Themselves.' Our Chartist readers will find this work worth their attention, and also the reply to it, a brilliant critique by Louis Blanc, entitled 'Plus de Girondin,' to be had of Jeffs, Burlington Arcade.

A small and often-desired volume has just been issued by George Tayler, of the Inner Temple, containing a variety of information which one would not expect to find necessarily included in such a subject. The mere enumeration of its subject will point out its value to our readers connected with Literary and Scientific Institutions. It is entitled 'The Law as to the Exemption of Scientific and Literary Institutions from the Parish and other Local Rates, with practical direc-

tions to such Societies, Mechanics' Institutes, &c., thereon, and Comments on the Policy of the Law and Exemptions from Rateability. With an Appendix of the Statute of 6 & 7 Vict., c. 36, and Verbatim Reports of the Cases decided in Hilary Term, 1851, and to the Royal Manchester Institution and the Manchester Concert Hall.'

There is a publication issued at 2d. in Glasgow, entitled the *Freeman*. In a religious sense it has both interest and merit. The editor, the Rev. Charles Clarke, says in No. 1, 'We have omitted "Christian" in the name of our journal in order that we might be free to introduce a greater variety of subjects than could with propriety appear under this term.' We observe some excellent papers by 'Atticus,' and other notable articles.

We have received a volume entitled 'National Education' from the author, Mr. James Miller. It struck us, on its appearance in 1834, as being a work of very novel treatment. The principles of morality, metaphysics, politics, and political economy are elicited and demonstrated after a mathematical fashion. We supposed it to have been long out of print, but, as we find this is not the case, we would advise the author to get it before the public.

The Whittington Club has lately refused to permit the *Reasoner* to lie upon the reading room table, to which it was formerly supplied by a member of the Club. The rejection, we believe, was founded upon a review of a book—which review was unexceptionable of itself, but some member of the library committee did not like the book reviewed, which he had read. If the same rule were followed universally, all the journals published would be excluded from all the news rooms in the country. Mr. Holyoake, being a member of the Club, wrote and offered to supply the monthly parts gratuitously. The offer was declined in the following letter:—  
'Sir,—I am directed by the managing committee to inform you, that they decline your offer of the *Reasoner* for the reading room of the institution, with thanks.—I am, sir, yours respectfully, W. STUDDWICKE, Sec.'

Those who remember the wonderful papers of Pel Verjuice, on marine service; will have some idea of the kind of revelations made on this subject by an Old Seaman. Mr. Watts, of Islington, whose energetic services in political and religious reform have long been known in circles where the actual work is done, has now contributed an extraordinary pamphlet to the cause of the sailors; entitled the 'Warning Voice of a Seaman; or, Five Years' Slavery in the British Navy.' There is no mistaking its genuineness; its language is that of a sailor; and it contains much which none but a sailor could or would write. Some of the newspapers have given extracts from it on the ground of their romantic interest. We only know of one case—that of Pel Verjuice—in which a sailor ever acquired the ability and retained the resolution to tell his own story when he had the means; for the wonder is that either ability or spirit should survive such slavery and cruelty as that through which Mr. Watts has passed. This compact little book of eighty duodecimo pages, published by Watson, is specially calculated to serve the cause of reform in the navy, which has begun to be agitated in some of our seaports; and we commend it to the attention of our friends wherever concerned in this needful agitation. Mr. Watts, at considerable expense, has presented a copy to every member of parliament. Every British sailor ought to have a copy in his possession, if only out of respect to one of themselves who has so manfully vindicated their claims.

G. J. H.

Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 266, 301s.—N. S. (half-yearly, which is always remitted the day on which it is due), 10s.—Mr. V. (a friend who, though he has long been blind, sends) 10s.—J. Shaw, Barrhead, 1s.—R. Lockhead, do., 1s.—Robert Bell, Edinburgh, 1s.—D. Murphy, 1s.—R. W., 1s.—Per Shaksperes, given by W. J. B., 20s.—J. Scott, Methwold, 1s.—William Holyoak, Leicester, 1s.—Total, 349s. [Dr. Lees writes:—‘I was much interested in your Lancaster Report, and as it is not right that any man should go into warfare at his own cost—and as the truth cannot be fully tested or brought out where we have only one side—I beg to enclose some books as my contribution towards the eliciting of it. The truth, I suppose, does not need more than fair play, and you ought to have no less. I send a complete set of the *Truth-Seeker and Present Age*, nine parts (to be sold at wholesale price—12s., published at 16s.); Jobert’s ‘*Philosophy of Geology*,’ with ‘*Thoughts on God, Genesis, &c.*’ (3s. 6d., published at 4s. 6d.) These books will lie at Mr. Watson’s for sale.]

GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.—July; 22nd [8], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, ‘The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.’ 20th [7], Ernest Jones, ‘Christ versus Mammon, or the doings of the Bishops.’

Hall of Science, City Road.—July 20th [7], Thomas Shorter, ‘The Institutions of Lycurgus.’ National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—July 20th [8], P. W. Perfit, ‘Luther, as the Victorious Man.’ South London Hall, Corner of Webber Street, Blackfriars Road.—July 20th [7], C. Southwell, ‘Pope, Gay, Pattison, Hammond, Savage, Hill, and Tickell.’

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George-street, Sloane-square.—July 18th [8], a Discussion. 20th, [7], a Lecture.

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8], Mr. J. B. O’Brien, ‘Home and Foreign Politics.’ Every Sunday [7], on ‘Moral and Social Science.’

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

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THE TRUTH-SEEKER AND PRESENT AGE. Containing papers on Scepticism, ancient and modern; on Idealism and Realism; and on Physical and Political Philosophy.—John Chapman, 142, Strand, London. (No. 13 and last, vol. II., price 7d., post free, from Dr. LEES, Leeds.)

## Our Open Page.

MR. LUKE BURKE did deliver two lectures, one entitled 'A Demonstration of the Existence of a God, upon purely philosophical principles;' the other 'An Inquiry into the Nature and Attributes of God, upon philosophical principles.' Mr. Holyoake replied to them in Mr. Burke's presence on two Sunday nights at the City Road Hall—but Mr. Burke could never be induced to publish them.

Professor Kinkel, in a lecture on the drama at Willis's Rooms, remarked that, in spite of Shakspeare's greatness, it was injudicious to take him for a model in the present day. 'Though a worthy object for the adoration of all poets and thinkers, it is an impiety to use him as a means for shackling art. A new epoch arises with great events of its own, and to represent these a new great poet is required.'

A placard to the following effect has been prepared for the poster:—'Some suppose there are no penal statutes against free expression; others know there are, and think it proper that it should be so. Such persons, and all who care for more accurate information on the subject, may find it in the "History of the Last Trial by Jury for Atheism in England," a work which comprises an historic vindication of the proceedings of the atheistical party during the past eight years, with an account of what they have done and why they have done it. To be had of most Booksellers and News-agents, if ordered.'

Can some reader oblige us with Archdeacon Hare's sermon on 'Self-Sacrifice,' or tell us who is the publisher?

Any reader having a copy of Godfrey Higgin's 'Anacalypsis' to dispose of may write to the office, as a correspondent is asking for one.

We have received from Mr. E. L. Pearson, of Islington, 1s. for the Committee issuing Mr. Owen's Tracts, also 10s. from Mr. Atkins, Civil Engineer, of Oxford, which have been handed to the secretary.

The first number of the *Inquirer and Instructive Repository*, a Monthly Magazine, was issued on July 1st. The contents are varied and interesting. An article entitled 'The Clergy and American Slavery,' contains a list of clergymen who, 'if by one prayer they could liberate every slave in the world, they would not dare to offer it.'

Richard Oastler, the factory children's king, has published in No. 9 of his *Home* an interesting reply to the 'Logic of Death,' by Britannicus, who saw it in a bookseller's shop in Northampton. Britannicus promises a second article on the subject.

The *Reasoner* exchanges with the *Popular Tribune*, M. Cabet's paper, published at Nauvoo, Illinois. French ability in journalism will be a serviceable example to the American press. The *Leader* frequently quotes from the *Popular Tribune*, and we shall be able often to present some extracts of interest to our Communist readers.

In Sunderland the Rev. Ebenezer Syme, and in Newcastle-on-Tyne Mr. Joseph Cowen, jun., have issued able addresses on behalf of the Polish and Hungarian Refugees.

Mr. J. Y. Aitchison, late Pastor of the Evangelical Union Church, New Street, Paisley, lately delivered a discourse on Christian Baptism, in which he proposed to 'show the Scripture Evidences which led to his change of mind upon that subject.' Where was Mr. Aitchison's Free Will when he suffered his opinions to be changed by evidence?

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## THE LANCASTER CONTROVERSY.

THE REV. MR. FLEMING'S SECOND LETTER: A REVIEW OF MR. HOLYOAKE'S RECENT LECTURES.

MR. H. boldly and decidedly avows himself an atheist. He has no faith in the generally-received doctrine of the Divine existence. He sees nothing in the structure of the universe—in the constitution of man—in the Scriptures of truth—in history, testimony, experience, to convince him of the being of a God, and he altogether rejects the doctrine—declares it to be an unestablished dogma, and proclaims to the world that it is a delusion and a fiction. Yet when plied with the difficulties that beset the position he has assumed, he is compelled to admit that there *may* be a God, and that he cannot say absolutely there is no such Being. He thus abandons his atheism; at all events allows it to be resolved into ignorance, or obtuseness of perception. Mr. H., therefore, after this admission made at the close of the last of the lectures now under consideration, can no longer say, there is no God, or to use his own exact words, 'that the God whom we seek is the Nature which we know,'—but this only, 'I know not that there is a God.' But what this amounts to, of what this is an acknowledgment, all will at once perceive.

The proofs of the existence of God, adducible, are too many even for enumeration. Reference to two or three only will now be made. There is then, as the first of these, the *religious instinct*, or capacity, or tendency, of man—a proof for the Divine existence on which too high a value cannot be set, but to which comparatively little importance or prominence has hitherto been given. Man is emphatically a religious creature. The forms of worship; the religious rites and ceremonies that everywhere prevail, prove to demonstration that he is so. And in what light is this religious feeling which is *in* men, and in them alone, which is always active, and everywhere manifested, and which is their peculiar distinction, to be regarded? Clearly in that of an argument in support of the doctrine of the Divine existence. As has been well said, 'It swells upwards, and amounts to a proof of the existence of God.'

'It is a simple fact, then, beyond all question, that humanity possesses this distinguishing attribute. All things beneath and around him seem to be made for man; but he is the subject of a strong, active, predominating impulse, that appears like a consciousness, on his own part, that he is made for something else. This impulse finds utterance and embodiment in religious ideas, and religious service. Now, it would be a strange anomaly in a world like this, in which every faculty of every creature finds its corresponding and appropriate object—in which wing and hoof, scent and speed, eye and ear, hand and horn, powers and passions, appetites and attributes of all sorts, are fitted exactly to something that seems to be made for *them*, or for which *they* are made—it would be a strange thing that the

only exception to this law should be the Lord and Master of the world himself!—and that it should occur, too, just in that one faculty that at once distinguishes and dignifies Him more than any other! The existence and actings of the religious instinct in man thus constitute a proof of the existence of God, just as the admitted existence of God involves the obligation to religion in man. The tendency in humanity 'to feel after God if haply it may find him—and to *have* something it may call God—whether it succeed in finding Him or not—is demonstrative of a Divine objective reality answerable to itself, in the same way as the half-formed wings of a bird in the shell are proof of the existence of an external atmosphere, and of the ultimate destiny of the bird itself.'

A second argument for the existence of God is *testimony*. It is a common thing for the atheist to argue thus: If God is, let him show himself, and we will believe in his existence. If He be possessed of the power generally attributed to him, He can so manifest himself as to disperse every shadow of doubt from our mind, and correct our error, and secure for himself the homage and obedience of our hearts: let him do this, and the question is settled for ever. Why is it that He does not do this, and at once remove all our perplexities, and put an end to the long and profitless discussion between believer and sceptic? It might be enough, as a reply to all this, to cite the words of Scripture, 'To him that hath shall be given;' 'If any man will do his will, he shall know the doctrine,' 'If they believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one should rise from the dead.' But the thing that is asked for has already been given. God *has* manifested himself. The earth has been lightened with his glory. The mountains have shook at his presence. A nation of men have trembled at his voice. Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, and John, saw him and lived. We have their testimony that they did so—their calm, enlightened, immutable testimony. What more is required? Is other testimony admitted? Why not their's?

Christians know by their own *experience* that there is a God. This is an argument which is of incalculable value to multitudes. It has been put thus:—'Suppose a native of the torrid zone were to say to a sceptic, "You say you have felt ice—I have *not* felt it;" would he consider this a sufficient offset to his own experience on the subject? Would he not think that his *testimony* was a reason why the other should *believe* in ice, although he knew nothing about it? Would he consider the *non-experience* of the other an equipoise for his own *experience*? Most certainly not. Yet the sceptic adopts this very rule with regard to the Christian. He sets his *non-experience* against the Christian's *experience*. But what then? If *his* state of mind proves that *he* does *not* know God, *that* of believers proves that *they* do know him. And if they do know him, then he exists; nor does his *non-experience* prove that he does *not* exist, but only that he has not experienced that he exists—as good a reason for his declining to *believe* in the Divine existence on the testimony of *others* as would be that of the inhabitant of the torrid zone for declining to believe in ice on *his* testimony, merely because *he himself* had never experienced the existence of any.' Mr. H. may tell me in answer to this that he has no experience whatever of the doctrine of the being of God, and on this ground, as well as on others, rejects it. I will receive his statement as true. But then, in my turn, I solemnly assure him that *I know there is a God*. Will he *believe me*?

The arguments for the Divine existence supplied by the common consent of mankind—the moral nature of man, the government of the world, and special providences—I pass over, and advert for a moment or two to that which is drawn

from the *design* which is everywhere apparent in the Universe. That marks of design are everywhere discoverable every candid individual will admit. But these marks of design in creation are as much an evidence of a designer who is above and independent of the universe, as are the marks of design supplied by the machinery of a factory, the mechanism of a watch, the apartments of a house, the various beds of a nursery garden, or the arrangement of the letters and words of a newspaper. Design cannot be admitted as evidence of a designer in one case and not in the other. If the design of a portrait evidences a designing mind; the higher, and clearer, and more important design of man, the reality is equally an evidence of an intelligent Maker. Mr. H. then is bound either to acknowledge God, or an intelligent First Cause of all things, or to show positively that these manifestations of design do not prove his existence. 'He is bound to show that all possible *appearances* of design do not *prove* a design, and of course a designer; and, therefore, that all possible appearances of design can be produced by a cause *void* of design; and, consequently, that the works of men, manifest as much appearance of the same as they may, do not prove them to be possessed of it.' These difficulties must be obviated, or the Divine existence admitted.

But then, Mr. H. replies, if appearance of design is evidence of a designer in one case, it is evidence thereof in another, and therefore proves that God had a designer or Maker. But how so? 'What appearance of contrivance or design is there in God? Is it said, in his mind? How in his mind? Why there is harmony, order, intelligence there. True, but it is not *these qualities themselves* but their *manifestations* as displayed in the works of nature which are made the proof of a designer. The argument is this: that, as mere matter is void of intelligence, it could exhibit no indications thereof, excepting so far as made to exhibit them by an intelligent being; and that as the Universe is mere matter, and *does* exhibit those indications, it must have had an intelligent author. The absurdity of the objection consists in making the *mind* of a being the *manifestation* of mind, and so an evidence of another designer.'

I have the most thorough confidence in the truth of the Bible. I believe that its claims to a divine origin rest on a foundation that has never been shaken, and that never can be disturbed. I see in the fact of its existence—the harmony of its parts—the sublimity of its doctrines—the purity of its morality—the accordance of its statements with human consciousness—the fulfilment of its prophecies—the greatness of its miracles—the early triumphs of Christianity, and in the effect which it produces in the experience and lives of those who heartily believe it, the most convincing and satisfactory proofs of its truth and divinity. I see all who come to the study of the Scriptures with a thoughtful, devout, and teachable mind, rise up from their perusal fully persuaded of their truthfulness, and ready to part with any thing and every thing rather than this persuasion, and I am the more and more confirmed in my belief with regard to them. But the establishment of the claims of the Bible is the establishment of the doctrine of the Divine existence. The one is the consequent and necessary effect of the other. But the Bible is true, and therefore God is.

This paper is solely occupied with the argument for the being of God, because Mr. H. is an atheist. But for this strange and painful fact, no such an amount of space would have been taken up with what to many will doubtless appear a superfluous task. What remains to be answered will come within a small compass, and form only another paper.

JAMES FLEMING.

[We regret that we have opened our columns to this controversy, but, having permitted Mr. Fleming's strictures on the lectures of Mr. Holyoake, we cannot, in fairness, refuse insertion to the vindication of the latter. Mr. H. will, of course, confine himself strictly to the arguments of Mr. Fleming, be as concise as possible, and, we are sure, will say nothing offensive to the feelings of those who so widely differ from his opinions.—Note to the first Letter, by the editor of the *L. G.*]

MR. HOLYOAKE'S REPLY TO MR. FLEMING'S SECOND LETTER.

*To the Editor of the Lancaster Guardian.*

SIR,—As it seems to afford Mr. Fleming some controversial satisfaction, I object not to it—otherwise, when he represents that *when I was 'plied with difficulties I was compelled to admit that there may be a God,'* I should tell him that what he paints as my compulsion is my custom. What he describes as being extorted from me at the 'close' of my last lecture was the opening explanation of my first, and was put on record by me many years ago. Mr. Fleming must know well that the whole question of the Divine existence is one of probability, and that he, no more than myself, is justified in using positive language. If hastiness of affirmation was not the controversial sin of the Christian, Mr. Fleming too would observe the rule which I follow, and concede in his turn that *there may not be a God.*

There is some propriety in the Unitarian affirming that there is a 'religious instinct' in man. In the Unitarian with whom religion is a sentiment and creed a service, piety at least approaches to the simplicity and purity of an instinct; but with the lower types of the Christian faith there can be no pretension to it. The thirty-nine articles are surely not instinctive in man, nor the iron dogmas of Calvin, nor the liquid doctrine of the Baptists, nor any creed which a Wesleyan may draw up. Why, even arithmetic is not instinctive in the human race, or so many could not be found to take three to be one!

What I advance in these communications is rather in deference to Mr. Fleming than to the quality of his review of my lectures. That review might have been written to conceal the tenor of my subjects, it seems to me so foreign to what I dwelt upon. Had my name been omitted throughout Mr. Fleming's three papers, I should not have identified them as relating to me at all. It is not for me to take the initiative, and recount what I actually urged. That might subject my reply to non-insertion. It remains for me to follow what my adversary has seen fit to put forward. Otherwise, as respects this very question of the religious instinct, I should observe that I did not introduce it. In a certain and fuller sense than Mr. Fleming has put it, I should concede it to him. Mr. Fleming frames his reply to me as though I was some indiscriminate assailant of everybody and everything, without the power to see or the candour to own that there are many things of reason and weight on the side opposed to me, demanding respectful consideration. But Mr. Fleming, in setting up defences of matters I never disputed, effectually keeps out of discussion the points I came to Lancaster to enforce. For instance, his argument on 'testimony' has no relation to me. Atheists, I think, do not utter the offensive and presumptuous speech put into their mouths by Mr. Fleming, and say, 'Let God show himself, and we will believe.' We only observe that the *manifestation* of God would dispel all doubt, and command the intelligent homage of every creature. As Deity takes not this course, it may be concluded that, human happiness being provided for, he has a lofty pleasure in its progress, and that he is too great to need and too cultivated to require that perpetual recognition only exacted by the lowest order of donors.



Mr. Fleming reminds me that Noah and Moses and John saw God, and asks why should I not receive their testimony? My answer is, that Mahomet and Joseph Smith give me the same assurance, and if I believed them all I should believe too much. In the same manner, when Mr. Fleming tells me that he *knows* there is a God, and asks will I believe him, I remind him that the Pagan, the Buddhist, the Thng, and Mormon say the same thing. There never was a superstition whose priests would not advance this presumptuous testimony. Am I to believe them all? Honest Catholics will tell me, as recklessly as Mr. Fleming, that they *know* that the Virgin Mary answers prayers. Will Mr. Fleming believe these persons? Certainly not. He must answer, as I do to him, 'I doubt not the sincerity of your declarations, but I am not satisfied of the accuracy of your impressions. The existence of God is not a matter of politeness. It is more a question of evidence than of courtesy.'

It is related of that Nestor of modern preachers, the Rev. W. Jay, of Bath, that when the divinity of Edward Irving was at its zenith, a disciple of the new church set out on a mission to Mr. Jay, with a view to induce that gentleman to join their body and be saved. The venerable minister demanded who he was, and what was his business? He answered, without hesitation, that he was an angel. He was confident of it; he had no misgivings about it; like the Rev. Mr. Fleming in the present case, he *knew* he was an angel. The Rev. Mr. Jay quietly requested him to take off his coat, which when the angel had done it, Mr. Jay proceeded to examine his shoulder blades rather roughly. 'Pray what are you doing, sir?' inquired the celestial visitant indignantly. 'Feeling for your wings,' was Mr. Jay's reply. The angel departed very wroth. Mr. Jay had a right to expect to find some particular conformation after so unusual a profession; and when Mr. Fleming claims the eminent distinction, which philosophers and divines have long craved in vain, of *knowing* that God exists, we have a right to expect some very original contribution to theological literature from his pen. One so gifted must have it in his power to furnish peculiar information; and I can only regret that in his present papers he has not justified the high expectation he has raised.

The argument of design, now considered as exploded in all advanced schools of theology, Mr. Fleming reproduces in every paper, as though he had nothing else to write about. An able critic in the *Topic* lately applauded Humboldt for excluding from his 'Kosmos' this hacknied dogma. 'Assuredly,' the commentator observes, 'the evidences of design in the creation require a previous idea in the mind of him that perceives them. Were not man a designer, they would never be perceived: and man, therefore, uses nature as a mirror, wherein are reflected the properties of *his own being*, which he *mistakes* for her own independent laws.' Mr. Fleming, who cannot comprehend Nature, yet assumes to know all about it, proceeds on the extravagant assumption that he knows it to be void of all self-action; that he has ascertained all the properties of matter; and that it has no inherent power to do what it does do.

Will the public suppose that I did not argue the question of atheism in my lectures; that I confined myself to showing that all opinion, even atheistical opinion, if conscientiously held, is morally innocent—as morally innocent as theistical belief; and that, as there was no crime in the creed of the understanding, that the atheist and the Christian must stand equally innocent in the eye of God—and that, therefore, the idea of eternal punishment for belief could have no truth in itself, no place in philosophy, nor admitted of defence in discussion? Mr. Fleming refused to debate this in my presence; yet, if he believes it, the people of Lancaster ought to know it, and if he denies it he ought to have given his reasons for it in his professed review of my lectures. For I did not conceal from him, that if I established this position in Lancaster I should be satisfied, though I established nothing else; and he who leaves this point out of a review of my lectures, leaves the character of Hamlet out of the play.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

### Examination of the Press.

**A VISITATION.**—On the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, which is always observed with great solemnity in the Roman church, a grand solemn high mass was celebrated at St. Augustine's, Granby-row, Manchester, which was splendidly decorated with flowers and candles on the occasion, and the church was thronged. Whilst Mr. Bardsley, the organist, was playing and the full choir singing the 'Dona nobis pacem,' Mr. Bardsley fell back from his seat at the organ, and was conveyed from the choir to the presbtery, where he died on Monday morning at half-past five, having never spoken after his attack. The consternation at this event was great; and the coincidence of the chorus, 'Dona nobis pacem,' with the death-stroke of the organist whilst playing it, was exceedingly affecting. Miss Bardsley, the daughter of the deceased, was in the choir singing at the time. —*Leeds Intelligencer*. [When Mr. Robert Cooper was taken ill while lecturing in Sunderland, the saints said it was a 'visitation.' Was this a visitation?]

**FAITH AND DUTY.**—Every pursuit which conduces to the welfare of the world, has its appropriate honour attending it; and a genuine virtue is developed by enthusiasm for what is highest in our own line of action. You may treat life as a problem, which has to be wrought out to a successful result, with certain moral conditions attached to it. Do not, because it looks difficult, timorously shrink from attempting the solution; but work through every part of it, whether you get the whole result or not, without violating one of its moral conditions. Such is the course of action which contributes to relative perfection, by linking our individual lives through specific duties with the general well-being of the world.—*Rev. J. J. Taylor's 'Christian Aspects of Faith and Duty.'*

**SIGNS OF PROGRESS IN CHINA.**—The following statement has appeared in the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*:—'The young Emperor of China, who succeeded his father at his death in February, 1850, having, at his accession, rejected the demands addressed to him by the mandarins for permission to persecute the Christians within his dominions, published a decree in the month of June in the same year, permitting the free exercise of the Christian religion in his dominions. The Emperor at the same time invited four missionaries to wait upon him, who are to be lodged in his palace. Monsignor Perronneau, Bishop of China, has informed us in a letter, dated the 5th of September, 1850, that the Emperor was educated by a Christian lady in whom the late Emperor placed unbounded confidence. A similar education had been formerly given to some of the Roman Emperors during the three centuries of persecution, and the Christians had thereby obtained an occasional respite, so valuable for the propagation of the faith amongst those souls, naturally timid, who in all times have been the most numerous.'

**PRIMITIVE METHODIST CONFERENCE.**—The assembly commenced its annual sittings in the connexional chapel at Yarmouth, on the 4th inst. The spiritual, financial, and numerical state of the connexion was found to be very encouraging, and the societies generally are at peace among themselves. The net increase of members for the year is 4019. Forty-four young men were received on trial as travelling preachers, and twenty-five who had completed their travelling probation were admitted into full connexion. Several preachers and other officials availed themselves of the privilege afforded by the liberal measures of the last Conference for the admission of hearers. The following are the statistics:—The number of stations, 303; numbers, 108,781; travelling preachers, 551; local preachers, 9077; class leaders, 6490; connexional chapels, 1662; rented chapels, &c., 3593; Sabbath schools, 1403; scholars, 112,098; teachers, 21,342; and deaths during the year, 1402.—*Lincoln paper*.

## The Aspects and Expedients of Christianity.

BY W. J. B.

THE Rev. Mr. Scott lately wanted to know what we have to say against the morality of Jesus. Another young man is coming forward to defend the sermon on the mount against attacks made upon it in the Victoria Park. It may be said of the morality of Jesus, that 'what is true is not new, what is new is not true.' It seems to me that Jesus took his morality chiefly from the Old Testament, somewhat disfigured and misquoted. It is difficult to know what Jesus meant by poor in spirit, or what he meant by the kingdom of heaven. If he were an example; at times he showed himself proud and offensive, and at other times little. He was violent till his fall, and then he was dumfounded, and could not say a word in his own justification; and so far from thinking that he himself had gained the kingdom of heaven, he said God had forsaken him. To be poor in spirit, therefore, if he is an example, is a bad precept, and holds out a fallacious reward. We think it equally wrong to mourn for the purpose of being comforted; nor do we think the inducement to mourn ever fulfilled. We would rather the world had no cause to mourn. We know of no mourning except for sins, and then people had much better mourn and not be comforted till they had given them up. Again: we know the meek do not inherit the earth, and therefore it is a false precept and delusive recommendation. Certainly, if Jesus was poor in spirit at times, he was never meek. To hunger and thirst after righteousness is vague language—as vague as your stomach would be if you expected to be filled by it; and Jesus's method of instituting a supper—of bread and wine—was not a teetotal method of illustrating the doctrine. To be merciful, and expect it in return is nothing wonderful; we should say to be merciful sufficiently repays itself, the giver and receiver. We do not see any mercy practised by Christ in the theory of Christianity. We rather think it bad morality that promises a blessing when people persecute you. Christ recom-

mends a mutilation of the person utterly incompatible with morality. He also confuses the laws of Moses with his peculiar notions of conversation. We do not see what our conversation has to do with a commandment against forswearing and perjury. In conversation, Jesus offended against his own rule, as his conversation—instead of being yea, yea, and nay, nay—was generally prefaced by verily, verily, ye wolves and hypocrites, wolves and whitened sepulchres.

The laws of Moses needed superseding, but the contrary precepts of Jesus would be utterly subversive of all justice. Not to resent crimes would be as immoral as to give to every one that asked whether they were good or bad. Besides which was the example of Jesus. He was not more patient in deed than he was in word: he beat the sellers of the temple and destroyed their property; he told his followers, on one occasion, to buy swords, and Peter cut off the ear of the officer sent to apprehend Jesus. Not to resist evil, we say, is very immoral; we should, on every occasion, show our love of good by opposition to what is bad. Jesus, by his speech and example, was travestying law and morality. Jesus says, 'Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate their enemy.' The contrary is really the truth: you are to do good to your enemies, as is said in many places of the Old Testament.

Jesus did not supply very high motives to good conduct: they were either rewards in heaven or punishments in hell. We know people are charitable from the love of it, and think no more about it.

The Lord's prayer is said to be a Rabbinical composition. Jesus instructs us to ask to be delivered from evil, when just before he told us not to resist it. Here we learn then that it was said by the Jews forgive your enemies, and that they represented God as forgiving us on this account. We ask if Jesus so represents himself, or so represents God. On the contrary, we have a vindictive God,

and a vindictive son, and we are to seek forgiveness of sins not in forgiving others, but in their sacrifice. If one be morality, is not the other immorality? We do not see any good in fasting, except for the health. All the wise fast more or less, put a restraint upon their appetites, and are rewarded by better health.

We think the treasure in heaven worse than the treasure upon earth; we think it an immorality to turn people's attention from the earth to indefinable treasures above. Of course it is a very good measure for the priest, who is assumed to keep the treasury of heaven. From Christ downwards to the present time, priests have turned such precepts to their own advantage, and taught that in giving to them you were laying up a treasure in heaven. You are to give to every one that asks, and not turn away from him who borrows. You are not to be particular in your selection; you are not to give only to the honest and good and industrious, but to the bad, idle, and all. We are not told what righteousness consists in, but we are frequently told that perfection consists in distributing wealth. A bag seems to have been kept for the purpose. To tell people to take no care of themselves, that they shall be provided for, is not true, and a maxim, if followed, which would lead to the greatest misery. It is a precept that only does for priests and impostors. Here we have another precaution of priestcraft: we are not to exercise our judgment as to who is a rogue or who is honest. Christ threatens his hearers if they judge him, as they had reason to judge after his speech to give all they had away and not take any care of themselves. We do not see any morality, we see a sinister design, in all these sentiments—we see the foundation of a grossly-immoral system.

In considering the morality of Jesus it is necessary to know what is morality. What is moral on earth is not, according to the defenders of divinity, morality in a God. With him all the attributes of excellence are changed. Allowing there was anything Providential in the mission of Jesus, we cannot see the fulfilment of any of the assignable attributes of divinity in the death of Jesus. Justice of heaven was injustice so to entrap mankind into their own destruction;

and Jesus, when he said 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do,' confessed his own error in letting them remain in their ignorance. Judging these matters in a merely human way, Jesus should have asked forgiveness of himself, or of his father, or of the people, for having been the instrument of their perdition—having brought destruction on Jerusalem, and the punishment of everlasting fire hereafter for mistaking him for a man. 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do,' has often been cited as the example of the forgiveness of injuries; but we say the Jews were the injured party in the affair.

Jesus spoke of the great things he would have done for Jerusalem had they believed in him. It was clear what was his course, viz., to make them believe, and take them under his wings. But though Jesus likens what he would do to a hen towards her chickens, it is clear he had not altogether the feelings of a hen. He was not content with preaching eternal torments hereafter for those who did not believe in him. In other respects his conduct, weighed humanly, is inexplicable. If he got a civil word from the Pharisees and Scribes, he answered them with low epithets; and when he partook of the supper of a Pharisee, he violated the common rites of hospitality by abusing his guest and his order. In spite of his injunction to the contrary in the sermon on the mount, Jesus seems to have been an abusive person. He had never the power of retaliation, except in words; but we may tell from what he said what he would have done, and what he threatens to do when he comes to judgment. Eighteen hundred years ago he was judged, condemned, and put to death, and luckily for the world his promised return, which was expected so soon, has not taken place. It is doubtless painful to many that this should be said, but the case warrants it. Was there any consistency in this sermon on the mount? Did he love justice, mercy, and truth? If so, he would not keep away 18 hundred years leaving us wandering in error, and continually treading the broad road that leads to destruction and the 'everlasting bonfire,' as Shakspeare names it. The meek in spirit promised himself and

his followers a very worldly triumph—the being fishers of men, and finally their judges, sitting on the twelve thrones of Israel.

If Popery be the type of Christianity, Jesuitry is its peculiar characteristic. The inconsistency of Jesus in morals and theory is all hewn into shape by the Society of Jesus. Their code of morals is an exact deduction from the contradictions avowed by Jesus in the sermon on the mount and elsewhere. They tell you to suffer, and use the arm of power themselves—to be patient of injuries, and they persecute. In the precepts and practice of Jesus there is no vagary that cannot find its justification. The authority of antiquity, the traditions of the saints, the writings of the fathers, and the practice of the churches have so interpreted the Scriptures. Can it be said that Jesus does not teach what has been invariably the reading of the four gospels for eighteen hundred years? For the revelation of the four gospels has been unfolded to us for the last eighteen hundred years, and we should be blind if we did not see it. It is too late now, in the nineteenth century, to say it means another thing. There may have been martyrs to a profession of belief of some sort in Christianity; but how many martyrs to unbelief of all kinds in its doctrines have been seen? considerably more we should say. Have not the alternate persecutions of each other by all Christians derived their authority from the words of Jesus? If a tree does not bear good fruit, cut it down and cast it into the fire; better lose one member, or life in this world, than to have eternity in hell fire. After all the denunciations and abuse of those who did not think like himself or follow him, such irritation of the mind is easily resolvable into acts; when the time comes that the weight of power is put into the hands of disciples to be exercised over dissentients. It is the great hope of every party one day to be triumphant, and the apostles were promised that they should be judges over the earth. They might endure persecution on the way to triumphant power, but come it would when they might least expect it. It was good for fishermen, carpenters, and such like, to be fishers of men. What are all the

*chevaliers d'industrie*, and swell mobs, but fishers of men? What are priests, and many others in professions and commerce, but fishers of men, regularly brought up to it? If any one was now to arise, and preach to men wearied in the work of over competition, and to women who eked out a needlework livelihood, and talk after the style of Christ, men would denounce him. Suppose he was to go to publicans and sinners, or to frequent public-houses, telling the rich, hated for the way in which they had got their wealth, that he came to forgive their sins—that those who had money had only to give it to him as their terms of acceptance into the kingdom of heaven, and those who had it not had no need any longer to take care of themselves, that heaven would provide food and clothing—does not everybody with the least knowledge of mankind know, that such a doctrine would attract a quantity of followers? A few rich there are always found to patronise any revolution—who, convicts in society themselves, hope to reach elevation by giving assistance to those who hold out such prospects to ambition, such relief to their vexations, as Jesus held out to them. Of the ignorant there would always be plenty; such examples of stupidity and ambition, simplicity and cunning as the character of Peter reveals. The elevation to them in this world was enough to turn their heads, and Peter evinced that he had not the strongest on his shoulders. Such Sancho Panzas will be always found to follow Don Quixotes on any knight-errantry. The prominence given to Peter affords a sample of the workings of a more astute on a more simple nature. That Peter must have been dazzled by the part he played, and that was assigned to him in the future, is clearly evident.

Peter and his colleagues were to have their thrones. Jesus would stimulate faith by suspecting it, and holding out rewards to them and to those who endure to the end. It was to be in this world, and in the other—or, if not in one, it was sure to be in the other—that the kingdom of heaven was to meet with fulfilment. Peter was told that he was next to his master, that he could forgive sins, that he was to judge mankind; that he was to feed his sheep, that he was to have the keys of heaven and hell.

Then in a moment of elation, if he boasted to the rest and brought upon himself their denial of his separate claims, he got rebuked by his master. When he thought the time was come that Jesus should show himself who he really was, and master of the powers he had even delegated to him, Jesus used no very complimentary language to him, and told him he was Satan, and to get behind him. No doubt Peter thought the entry into Jerusalem the consummation of his own and master's greatness, and at a hint at a sword it appears he was the only one who bought one and used it. All the rest fled, but Peter no doubt thought he was legion, and single-handed was able to put to flight the armed force of Jerusalem and Rome. We must conjecture it was an entire failure, and that he was further duped into believing that he had cut off an ear which his master put on again—so the story runs, for if he had used his sword we cannot conceive why he should have been allowed quietly to follow, and not been made to answer for it.

From such a class as Peter's no doubt Jesus might largely recruit. We see Jesus gave the keeping of the money they levied to Judas. The Eleven must have thought this care of riches rather inconsistent with the profession of poverty and having no care for the things of this world. But diamond cut diamond: when Judas saw the bubble was about to burst he departed with the capital, though there was enough left in the inexhaustible mine of human credulity always to furnish the bag, and be the prize to every future Judas in the church.

Of the class of easy converts among the females might be reckoned Magdalene. Her new vocation was certainly a much easier method of gaining a livelihood than common prostitution. There is no assertion that she became immaculate: it is evident she loved the Lord, and the Lord loved her. It was certainly a place well fitted for a woman's ambition to be the chosen of the Lord. It would not do for a leader of the people to make these selections in these days. Christ set her above an honest woman, her sister Mary had some care for things, instead of no care, as the Magdalene, and therefore, according to the sermon on the mount,

the morality of the Magdalene was preferred. In the same spirit the Magdalene threw away a box of precious ointment, and delicacy too, on the feet of her master. The disciples thought it better had been divided among the followers—but again Jesus defended the Magdalene on the principle laid down in the sermon on the mount. Ways and means must have been good with her when she could afford a box of ointment.

Another class from which Jesus largely recruited, male and female, were the maniacs, a description of persons not a very suitable accompaniment, if Jesus himself were in his senses. No doubt many did flock around him, when he could give to so many thousands a miraculous picnic. We would ensure the success of any religion on this principle of belief, we would engage to make converts of all the world, and withdraw them from all other superstitions. Whether for good or for evil, we would not presume to say, yet we would not reproach them (as the Jews did their master), with being winebibbers and gluttons.

The first miracle he performed, that of turning water into wine, would be sure to collect all the thirsty as followers (as the loaves and fishes would the hungry), who probably had nothing but the Jordan for the quenching of their thirst. However admirable might be the transubstantiation of Adam's ale, given by the father, into wine, given by the son—a conquest over nature worthy of Bacchus the son of Jupiter—we do not think it added to the moral character of Jesus. Turning water into wine was his first miracle, and at the famous supper turning his blood into wine was his last.

There is, in fact, no possibility of judging, in the usual way, the extraordinary facts which faith has sanctified in the life of Christ, without giving offence. Father Newman tells us, 'God's logic is not our logic, his morality is not our morality;' then why not at once say he is not to be judged by our morality, and admit that he was immoral according to our notions? If Mr. Scott, and other Christians, are to challenge us to object to the ethics of Jesus, let them concede to us the same freedom that they exercise when they criticise Confucius, Mahomet, George Fox, or Joseph Smith.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## FREETHINKING NOT A DISQUALIFICATION.

SIR,—Under the head of 'Advice to those who go to Church against their will,' you gave some very useful suggestions in No. 267 of the *Reasoner*. With you, I think that something more may usefully be said upon so important a subject as the conduct of freethinkers whilst they are in the power or under the surveillance of the orthodox. I write because I feel strongly, because I think I see my way clearly. What I have to say is credited with three years' experience; and allow me to premise that I am a young tradesman without capital, therefore not independent of the world in a pecuniary sense.

My impression is, that now the greater portion of persecution is earned by harsh dogmatic language on the part of freethinkers. Much of the opprobrium in which we are held results from undignified timidity. Religionists think we ought to be ashamed of our opinions, because to them our opinions appear to be wicked and horrible. By timidity and a want of candour in the expression of opinion, we confirm religionists in their bad opinion of us and our principles. If we appear ashamed of that which we believe honourable and useful, and listen in deferential silence to that which we believe erroneous and injurious, we ought not to be surprised at, and it appears to me we deserve, the bad opinion of the religious world.

There appears to me not to be half the danger in a fearless expression of opinion as is generally supposed, if such expression of opinion is clothed in temperate language. Humanity is stronger than bigotry, and can always be awakened by kind and considerate language joined to a conciliating manner. If we seek to conciliate instead of to anger, to persuade instead of to conquer—if, instead of attacking, we offer ourselves for conversion, as earnest seekers of any truth opponents may have to offer—bigotry will not be roused, prejudice awakened, nor rancour displayed. If we shew that we stand upon a common ground with them, namely, the desire for truth, and application of it for the benefit of the human family—thus showing our objects are the same, however we may differ as to the means of attaining them—there is little doubt on my mind that men would rationally discuss their differences. Men's conclusions are oftentimes the same, though drawn from different premises. Who differs with his family, with the world, should be careful to find out, and keep constantly in view, that in which he agrees with them—narrowing the gulf as much as possible that divides them, that it may easily be bridged over. Unimpeachable conduct and untiring suavity of demeanour are the best safeguards against oppression for opinion's sake, and are opinion's best advocates. It is easy and useful to show that we cannot help our opinions, they being the result of evidence coming under the observation of an understanding we did not make. If this is well urged, a Christian cannot fail to see he must bring evidence to substantiate his position before he can hope, or ought to hope, to change us.

My personal experience substantiates the above. In my dogmatic period I suffered for my dogmatism, though apparently for my opinions. By intemperate expression I earned dislike and disrespect instead of esteem. I made foes instead of converts. Now, although I know well I cannot justly lay claim to half the qualities and discipline that a freethinker should have, affairs are greatly altered. Yet I never shrink discussion privately nor publicly, and if I wanted a character I should apply to Christians who know me to be an atheist active in the promulgation of my opinions.

A Christian acquaintance with whom I have often conversed upon the relative merits of Christianity and atheism, takes the trouble to teach me book-keeping gratuitously. A Roman Catholic, who hates Protestantism and believes I am inevitably doomed hereafter, tenders the use of his purse whenever I am in need of cash for business purposes. I have no claim on these persons, excepting that of an ordinary acquaintance. Those with whom I come in contact in trade treat me with respect and trust, at the least equal to what I can expect from my position apart from peculiarity of opinion. Remember, I discuss with every one as occasion offers, excepting with customers, and then I never conceal my opinions.

In respect to the particular case of your correspondent, if obliged to go to church I advise him to take notes, and when at home to point out the inconsistencies of the sermon, if there are any, and show how much of the practices of all the ministers of the Gospel differs from many of the precepts of the gospel they preach. Let him balance the loss of dignity, of independence, of truth, the deterioration of character (inevitable consequences of his painfully-constrained position), with the advantages he *might* have to yield by following a nobler and freer course. It is for him to decide upon his own affairs: I have here given him the benefit of my experience, should I hear that it has been of any service I shall be much gratified.

In conclusion allow me to say, sir, that you were the first who taught me that it is far more often manner than matter that creates anger and incurs persecution in private life.

EXALTADA.

[We never received a letter more encouraging than this. The writer omits his name only because he has spoken of himself, as it may seem, in self-laudatory terms. We knew him only in what he styles his 'dogmatic period,' and if it were not for the reference with which his letter concludes, we should say we never thought it possible that he would ever come to express views so sound and pursue a course of conduct so wise as he has now adopted.—ED.]

#### MORALITY INDEPENDENT OF RELIGION.

SIR,—I have been for some time engaged in a correspondence with a Christian on the subject of religion, and copy a portion of his last letter, and my reply to it, because I think that many who read your periodical, while they disbelieve that the Christian religion has any other than a purely human origin, may think, as my correspondent does, that atheism would be fatal to society.

It appears to me that while so many workmen are laboriously engaged in trying to knock down the old Christian church, it would be well if some would help the downfall by devoting a little time to the duty of pointing out the perfect independence of morality on religion. We are constantly asked, 'How are people to be kept in order without religion?' &c. In short, it is a common idea among Christians, that when revealed religion is abandoned as a superstition, that men's passions will be let loose without restraint of any kind—that morality is identical with religion, and will go with it.

My friend says—'Granting, for the sake of argument, that what is called Revealed Religion is no such thing, but a purely human invention, I maintain that to destroy such illusion would be fatal to the best *human* interests of mankind; that society could not exist; chaos would be the consequence. Morality and the very laws of the land are founded on Christianity. Let us take for consideration the effect of universal atheism on the present relations and obligations of the two sexes. I choose this subject as being the most clearly important and the most



helplessly wrecked along with Christianity. What is to prevent every young female yielding to the first temptation? Sinful? To whom? There is no God! Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow you die. Obey the dictates of *Nature*. The same argument holds good with respect to married life. I abstain from enlarging on this theme. Your own reflections will be able to follow up the subject till you are horror struck to find that your atheism has led you on till you have lost the power of distinguishing good from evil.

I replied to this briefly—'Morality and religion are constantly confounded in the minds of Christians, whereas they are perfectly *independent* of one another. Human motives are quite sufficient to prevent the sad state of female virtue you predict as the consequence of atheism. Morality is innate in the human mind; the more civilised the higher will be the standard of morality. Honour and chastity, *for their own sakes*, are human motives, and will for ever be valued in proportion to the cultivation of the mind, which I call civilisation.'

Sinfulness or immorality is, as Carlyle justly calls it, 'stupidity,' which will be more effectually combatted by intellectual cultivation than by threats of fire and brimstone.

N.

[Upon this large and useful question, the 'Independence of Morality and Religion,' we have never been able to dwell sufficiently. Of late, incidentally, more attention has been paid to it by us. We should be glad to hear further from 'N.' on this subject.—Ed.]

#### TO MY FELLOW SUBSCRIBERS TO THE 'REASONER.'

SIR,—From your Platform I desire to say a few words to my fellow subscribers to the *Reasoner*. I never look upon the individual items of the *Reasoner's* list without regret, that so important a cause does not receive wider support from the general body of its subscribers.

Religion is stationary—more, it is obstructive, it is antagonistic to the true happiness of mankind. It preys upon us from our births to our deaths, and pursues its Roman Catholic victims beyond the grave. It demands our time for mummeries that are mockeries to manhood, to an object which it insults rather than worships by its puerilities. If its promises were true, they would be worthless. It tortures with imaginary fears, and renders life miserable by its slavish exactions. It demands the support of a useless class often arrogant in their acquired power. Its morality is questionable. It professes equality, but where? In a heaven, or the grave; *not* where alone it would be serviceable—on earth. It spreads much dissension, where its professors acquire power. It makes and supports class-made laws, and calls upon the power it supports to aid in persecution. It demands implicit obedience, and thus robs us of liberty—denounces our rational amusements, and renders life miserable, dark, ascetic, and gloomy.

We who seek in the practice of morality, general, and consequently individual happiness—whose desires do not presumptuously extend beyond this life—with whom belief, or disbelief, is a matter of evidence—stood, but a few years ago, as parias upon the earth—not to be believed—not to be trusted—not to be associated with—fit only to be feared, persecuted, and destroyed. Now, through laborious advocacy, principle is conceded to it. Men differing widely from its opinions, at least allow to us plain dealing—in some cases, fairness; and we may consider that we have made some social advance.

It must be that many readers of the *Reasoner* are not impressed with the import-

ance of supporting, with the best of their means, a work, the common ground of which is liberty of thought and speech.

We believe religion to be superstition; but dare we where and when we would say it, though our self-respect stood jeopardised? Could many of us do so at present individually without endangering our bread? In this foot to foot battle of life, independence is often forced to yield its outward acquiescence. Indignities (hardly to be borne without endangering manhood) are often thrust upon us, yet we seem to take them coolly, and look on with indifference, leaving almost unsupported those who dare, and will do, what individually we cannot. We have reasons for our disbelief, and ought to be free to give them, when and where we would, or never rest until we can, and not calculate with how little a pittance we can get others to do it for us. If our principles banish unnatural fears, by exploding imaginary terrors, are we so selfish as not to ask others to share our peace? Good accumulates by sharing it, and every evil overcome enlarges the empire of happiness. We admire enthusiasm and generosity in others, but seem, to me, to forget it in our own cause. Our editor, I am afraid, cannot charge us with being over zealous.

Are our memories so treacherous that we have already forgotten how, but a few years ago, bigotry, backed by power, answered the enunciation of principles on which the *Reasoner* is based, with persecution and a prison, yet found so firm those it attacked that persecution promulgated, and the iron arm was arrested? Peace, it then hoped, would lead to supineness, and if let alone opposition would sink into insignificance, and perish of inanition. Shall we realise that hope, and thus bury ourselves? Shall success generate neglect to our advocates and our cause, when it ought to bring support with added vigour? Shall we, who should aid generously and cheer on earnestly, delay with indifference? Let each of us place himself in the position of our editor, and ask what support he would reasonably expect. Would he expect the main support to come from some half dozen individuals? Would he expect pecuniary loss? Let us not commit ourselves the fault we should condemn in others.

From a careful view of our position now, and contrasting it with the gloomy aspect of former years, I am filled with pleasure. I can only point to the unprecedented fact of the *Reasoner* being in its eleventh volume—a great number for a work openly advocating its principles to reach. Our cause is advancing, yet what might be done by more general and liberal support! Power may yet be against us. Authority may frown. Bigotry may rail. The right to search, by the light of reason, for the amount of evidence which shall determine our belief or disbelief must, in the end, become universal. To facilitate this is our duty. Let us not forget the means of its attainment.

W. E. B.

#### COMPLETION OF THE THOUSAND SIXPENCES FOR THE SOCIETY FOR REPEALING THE TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.

Previously recorded, 932 sixpences.—Additional subscriptions: A Friend (by Mr. Watson), 2 sixpences; J. W. C. (by do.), 2; A Friend (per Mr. Eilson, Leicester), 1; R. W. (per Mr. Starzaker), 1; Lower Place Institute, 3; Isaac Newton, Oldham, 5; James Gray, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 2; Marshall Gray, do., 1; William Price, do., 1; J. H. Crosswell, do., 4; John Watt, do., 2; Edward Johnson, do., 1; James Gray, 1; R., 1; S., Birmingham, 1; Henry Morris, Derby, 1; E. Scholey, Peterborough, 1; J. Evans, Sheffield, 1; Undecimus, 10; James Shaw,

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## GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Finsbury Square.—July 27th [74]. Henry Knight, 'Sunday Science versus Sunday Sermons.'—29th [84]. Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.'

Hall of Science, City Road.—July 27th [74]. Walker Cooper, 'Charitable Institutions: their Uses and Abuses.'

National Hall, 302, High Holborn.—July 27th [8]. P. W. Perfit will lecture.

South London Hall, Corner of Webber Street, Blackfriars Road.—July 27th [74]. C. Southwell, 'Somerville, Broome, Pitt, Blair, Swift, Wana, and Hamilton.'

Institute of Progress, 19A, Upper George-street, Strand-square.—July 28th [9]. a Discussion. 27th [74], a lecture.

Scientific Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [84]. Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [74], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Arcopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday [8]. a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [74], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

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## Our Open Page.

THE *Christian Examiner*—conducted by the most intellectual and pious D. D.'s, of the Channing school, and believers in supernatural Christianity—in a clever article against Feuerbach, says—'It is folly to talk of *demonstrating* God's existence; we cannot argue with a man to whom it is not a matter of inward consciousness, any more than we can discuss colours with a blind man. God's being is an object of faith, and *not of demonstration*, and all attempts at proof *have been signal failures.*' (Vol. xlix., p. 133. September 1850.)

On Sunday next Mr. G. J. Holyoake will lecture in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on 'The Intellectual Truth and Moral Tendency of Atheism Vindicated against the recent Aspersions and Misrepresentations of it by Opponents in that town.' Mr. Holyoake expects to visit Padiham and Manchester before his return.

The article by 'Ion,' entitled 'The Workman and the Exhibition,' which lately appeared in No. 65 of the *Leader*, has been reprinted, by permission, and at the cost of a manufacturer in the North, for gratuitous circulation among visitors at the Crystal Palace, by whom he thinks it may be usefully read. Other copies can be had at one halfpenny each, or sixpence per dozen, of our publisher.

Archbishop Hughes has reached Paris, says the *New York Herald*, on his way home from Rome, without the red hat. The Pope has behaved very shabbily to our New York prelate. Instead of giving him a hat—a Cardinal's hat—his Holiness only gave him a fish. The Pope was more polite to Mrs. Bennett, when she last visited the Eternal City. His Holiness presented to that lady a beautiful cameo portrait of himself, and a plenary indulgence, signed by his own hand, for her husband. Unfortunate Archbishop!

Le Flaneur remarks:—'It will be recollected that one of the charges against Lord Torrington was that he hanged a Buddhist priest in his calico robe of pagan priesthood. The intelligent electors of Cork are very much dissatisfied with their member, the witty Serjeant Murphy, for his vote. "Augh, the Judas! Sure he voted for hanging a holy praast! Augh, the villain!" The serjeant says it would be of no use to explain that it was a pagan priest, and not a Roman Catholic; but that if he tells them it was a Protestant priest, he shall become more popular than ever.'

The *Tablet* contains an advertisement appealing for subscriptions in aid of the Popish rioters at Birkenhead. Among the donations advertised are:—'His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, £10.'

The 'Principles of Belief held by a Searcher after Truth,' given in a recent number of the *Reasoner*, have been reprinted and circulated in Lincolnshire.

We have received No. 1 of the *Christian Reasoner*, an imitation of this paper.

No. 2 of the *Exponent* contains an article on Thomas Cooper.

The *Popular Tribune* (Mr. Cabet's Journal) tells us, in No. 18, that the Archbishop of Paris occupied himself with social reforms, and now a dominican friar, Father Lacordaire, one of the most eloquent preachers who are the pride of the Catholic church in France, is also meddling with those questions, and with the approbation of said archbishop, is almost indulging in *Socialism*, says the *conservative correspondent* of the *Courrier des Etats-Unis*, to the great scandal of those whom he terms the *insolent aristocracy of money*.

# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## THE LANCASTER CONTROVERSY CONCLUDED.

THE REV. MR. FLEMING'S THIRD LETTER: A REVIEW OF MR. HOLYOAKE'S RECENT LECTURES.

IF there was one thing for which Mr. H.'s recent lectures were more marked than another it was this—*unsupported assertions*. He was at no pains to inform his audience of the sources of his information, to assign his reasons for the opinions he advocated, and to give his authority for what he brought forward as facts. He asserted much but proved little. Had it been otherwise, had he supported by clear and irrefragable arguments what he urged as objections to Christianity, the consequences of his visit to Lancaster might, in the experience of a few, have been serious and disastrous; but as it was, the firmness of the foundation of the Christian's faith was only made more than usually obvious, and little or no injury, I should apprehend, was sustained by any one. Still the course which Mr. H. pursues, whether advantageous or not to the cause he advocates, is one to which every person who values truth and loves fair play will very strongly object. It evades the difficulty of the question at issue, produces false impressions with regard to the real character of Christianity, and countenances a mode of dealing with the gravest and most important subjects which cannot be too earnestly deprecated and opposed. But that I may not even seem to fall into the error of which I complain, I forthwith submit the following assertions of Mr. H. as specimens of those with which I now find fault.

'The books of the Buddhists contain a better system of morality than the Bible.'  
'I have known districts where truth has been entirely suppressed by persecution.'  
'Civilisation, or the means of producing it, has always preceded the introduction of the Gospel among the people who have received it.'  
'The Christian system is essentially a system of persecution.'  
'Popery is Bible Christianity; all its doctrines are reducible from the scriptures.'  
'Sir Isaac Newton was a Unitarian—was a poor theologian—was great only in mathematics—is never quoted by the pulpits—and wrote only one book on religion towards the close of his life.'

These are some of the grave and important statements which Mr. H. ventured to advance without proof or confirmation. But the reason, doubtless, was because he had none to supply. They might, therefore, with perfect safety, be left where they are. Unsupported, what are they worth? Yet a few counter statements may not be without use. The works of Dr. Medhurst and Mr. Fortune, on China, prove then the first of these assertions to be totally untrue: the whole history of truth in the world contradicts the second: the travels of Captain Cook, Ellis's Polynesian Researches, Williams's Missionary Enterprises, Moffat's South Africa, demonstrate the incorrectness of the third: every page of the New Testament, and the life of every man who strictly adheres to the example and teachings of Jesus Christ, refute the fourth: the Bible, Fletcher's Lectures on Roman Catholicism, Cumming's Protestant Discussion, and Seymour's Mornings with the Jesuits at

Rome, supply the answer to the fifth: and the Life of Sir Isaac Newton, by Sir David Brewster, triumphantly confutes the last.

Mr. H. objects to *miracles* as evidences for the truth of Christianity, because they are not intelligible to the common people. But what is there that is unintelligible about them? What is there that requires to be known about them to constitute them proofs of the truth of the Scriptures, that the most illiterate may not comprehend? It is as *facts* that miracles are evidences of the verity of the Bible, and as facts they are intelligible to all. The objection, therefore, that they are unintelligible, is a mere evasion of their force as a source of proof for the truth of the Christian religion.

The prophecies of the Scriptures are objected to by Mr. H., not on the ground of improbability or impossibility, but of *meagreness*. They refer to such *insignificant* events, and to such *obscure peoples!* In making such an assertion, Mr. H. is either guilty of the most culpable misrepresentation, or shows himself to be most grossly ignorant of the Book against which he declaims. The prophecies of the Old and New Testaments refer to the greatest and most important events that have ever occurred, and embrace the interests not only of nations, but of mankind at large. They comprise the overthrow of Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Jerusalem—the rise and fall of the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires—the dispersion, conversion, and restoration of the Jews—the universal diffusion of Christian truth, the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment of mankind. Are these obscure and insignificant matters?

But the crucifixion of Christ forms a main hindrance with Mr. H. to a reception of Christianity. He cannot reconcile that event with the representations usually made of the Divine character, and with truth, justice, and love. And he rejects as wholly untrue both the record of the event itself, the book in which it is found, and the doctrine of the existence of Him who is said to have required such a sacrifice for the expiation of human guilt. A strange mode indeed of settling the question of the truthfulness of Christianity! A 'New class of reasons in truth for not accepting the religious doctrines of the day!' But things have not quite come to such a pass as this. The verity of the Bible does not depend on Mr. H.'s ability to harmonise its statements with his notions of propriety and rectitude. It rests on an infinitely nobler, better, and surer basis. The death of Christ was a voluntary death—a free, spontaneous, and self-chosen act on the part of Christ himself, and as such never can, on any ground of fairness and justice, be adduced to tell against the Divine character, as one of perfect purity, boundless love, and infinite excellence. '*No man taketh my life from me, I have power to lay it down and to take it up again.*' '*I came not to do my own will.*' '*Christ loved us and gave himself for us.*'

But if the crucifixion of Christ does not show that God is stern, unforgiving, unloving, and unlovely, the punishment of men for carrying into effect his own purposes, most assuredly does. The betrayers and crucifiers of Christ fulfilled the Divine intention and decree: yet they were charged with the deepest guilt for so doing, and punished accordingly. Does not this demonstrate capriciousness and cruelty, and constitute God unworthy of our confidence and regard? So reasons Mr. H. But before this reasoning is accepted and deemed of any weight, the following questions must be answered. On what ground did the men in question act? Were they acquainted with the Divine purpose, and did they act with the view of executing it? What were the motives and feelings by which they were influenced in the course they pursued? Is it opposition to the secret decrees of God or to his clearly revealed will that constitutes men sinners, and deserving of

punishment? The men in question transgressed and disregarded, by the course they prosecuted, what had been given to them as the rule of their conduct, and were influenced throughout by the worst of motives and feelings. 'Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever.' The secret purposes of God are never intended to be a rule of life to us: it is the law and the testimony that constitute this, and which are clearly and fully revealed to us in the books of the Scriptures.

But then men, according to Mr. H., cannot be sinners. They live under the regime of a stern, inflexible, and irresistible necessity; and from what they cannot avoid or prevent themselves from doing, they cannot be accounted either responsible or guilty. Admit this doctrine to be true—that men are necessitated to do all that they perform, and what is the conclusion which directly and irresistibly follows? This, most obviously—that they can no more be charged with offence against one another than against God—that do what they may they are guiltless—that no sovereign can charge a rebellious subject with crime, no parent accuse a wayward and self-willed child of disobedience and ingratitude, and no man blame another for any amount of injustice and injury he may receive at his hands. But a doctrine which is so absurd and monstrous, which every man's consciousness tells him is untrue, and which Mr. H. himself constantly disregards, though earnest in the inculcation of it, I will not spend a moment in refuting. The man who seeks refuge in such a doctrine is generally in a sorry plight. His cause is then desperate.

'A tree,' said the greatest and best of teachers, 'is known by its fruit.' Never was a simpler or more satisfactory rule of judging of the character of opinions and systems given. Can infidelity bear its application? I believe not. But whether it can bear it or not, the application shall be made. Infidelity has always been boastful and pretending. It offers to men what is better than Christianity—it assures them of calm retreats, elysium fields, never-failing gratifications, freedoms from the power and tyranny of the pulpits, reason instead of faith, certainty instead of doubt, intelligence instead of superstition, and confidence in the hour of death instead of doubts and misgivings. Well, what are its actual fruits? It has long existed—nearly as long as Christianity. What, then, has it accomplished for mankind? What wastes has it reclaimed? What nations of barbarians has it civilised? What barren, burning deserts has it converted into cultivated and fertile lands? How many lazar houses has it erected? How many hospitals? How many asylums? How many houses for the destitute? How many missionaries has it labouring among the degraded tribes of Africa—among the superstitious Hindoos—among the savage inhabitants of the South Sea Islands? When enthroned in France, was the reign it set up a reign of love—the laws it enacted righteous laws—the customs it countenanced generous and elevating customs—and the morality it inculcated and encouraged high-toned morality? The answer is emphatically, No. Infidelity has none of these things. But 'a tree is known by its fruit.'

JAMES FLEMING.

#### MR. HOLYOAKE'S REPLY TO MR. FLEMING'S THIRD LETTER.

*To the Editor of the Lancaster Guardian.*

SIR,—The tone of the review to which I now close my reply is, I am bound to admit, much more decorous and kindly than I could have expected after the extraordinary opening of our controversy, which appeared in the *Guardian* of May 17. Yet, in his review, my reverend opponent, directly and by implication, applies to

me twenty-one epithets, such as a dispartant employs when, not content with stating, he must also judge his own case. The purity of controversy warns me not to retort these epithets, which would cause an objection to be made to free discussion itself, which properly belongs to the peculiar manner in which it is sometimes conducted. Therefore, as in my previous letters, I shall confine myself to Mr. Fleming's substantive arguments.

As examples of '*unsupported* assertions,' which my opponent somewhat emphatically declares me to have indulged in, he reports that I made mention of the books of the Buddhists as containing a better system of morality than the Bible. My preference for Buddhism, as I stated, was founded on the fact that its theory was that of the worship of Pure Intellect, and the elevation of men to the heavenly state by meritorious works, which I considered more instructive than the worship of the Christian deities, and healthier than Salvation by Faith. Mr. Fleming does not say whether Medhurst and Fortune differ from me in these points of fact; it is nothing to the purpose that they differ from me as to opinion.

In the course of one of my lectures, I read from the review in the *Examiner* of Sir Emerson Tennent's late work on 'Christianity in Ceylon, and the Buddhist Superstitions'—a late authority, which I may oppose to Mr. Fleming's authorities, Medhurst and Fortune. The *Examiner* reports that 'the chief results which the Christian missions in Ceylon demonstrate is the important fact, that nothing but the preliminary cultivation of the intellectual faculties by education and secular teaching has as yet succeeded in India in preparing the way for the Gospel;' and I added that our missionaries generally found the natives more grateful for our arts than for our creeds. It was thus that I 'supported' this assertion.

True, I said the Christian system is one of persecution, and I told Mr. Fleming how, in the case of my own imprisonment, Christians set a watch upon me, Christians informed against me, Christians prejudiced the public against me—how by Christian pay were hireling lawyers retained against me—how by Christian witnesses I was confronted, by the Christian press misrepresented, by a Christian jury found guilty, by a Christian judge condemned—how Christian preachers proved the scripturalness of the whole proceeding, and Christian congregations gave thanks to God for the success of the prosecution. Also I read to Mr. Fleming other passages from the History of my Trial. Thus I sustained another of the assertions which Mr. Fleming, by a remarkably free use of language, affirms that I left unsupported. In the same manner, did space allow me to recount the argument of my lecture on 'Catholicism consistent Christianity'—Catholicism which I proved had for its principle, Authority; for its agents, 1. Terror, 2. Persecution, 3. Inquisition—the public would see that Mr. Fleming must attach some private meaning to the term unsupported when he connects it to my assertions. Perhaps he means unsupported to *his* satisfaction.

If Mr. Fleming distrusts my experience and the facts I detailed as to truth being put down by persecution, let him read one of the leaders in the *Times*, of Nov. 28, 1850. If that reference is inconvenient, he may see the passage in *Reasoner* No. 243.

Brucker, who renders the completest account of Sir Isaac Newton's religious opinions with which I am acquainted, and which Mr. Fleming will find quoted at length in Chalmers's 'Biographical Dictionary,' gives us no idea that Newton believed in the Trinity. The gist of Sir Isaac's argument, as given by Brucker, is this:—'God is omnipresent *substantially*, for power cannot exist without *substance*.' 'What the substance of anything is we are *wholly ignorant*.' 'God exists to us in a manner *altogether unknown*.' Surely this is Unitarian, so far as the oneness of God is concerned? Was such a medley of divinity as this ever before or since



propounded by a mathematical philosopher? How did Newton know that God existed 'substantially'—that is, *in substance*—if we are 'wholly ignorant' what substance is? How could Newton prove that God exists 'substantially,' if the 'manner' of his existence to us is wholly unknown? If the pulpits make a practice of quoting this wondrous assortment of contradictions—which Mr. Fleming asserts, by implication, Sir David Brewster triumphantly establishes—all I can say is, the pulpits are less wise than I took them to be. The only edition of Brewster's *Life of Newton* which I have seen is the New York one in the British Museum. Sir David gives very fairly the conflicting testimony as to Sir Isaac's opinions, but anything but 'triumphantly establishes' his Trinitarianism.

Whatever can my reviewer mean when he says I 'objected to miracles because they were unintelligible to the common people?' On the contrary, I said they were the most intelligible things possible, especially the fish with the income tax in his mouth, which would be quite a favourite in these times—especially the few small loaves which fed 12,000. The Poor Law Commissioners would make a king of that man who could work such miracles now. A recent writer of no mean research has lately observed, that 'One of the insuperable difficulties of the miracle is the moral one—why, if really possible, it does not manifest itself oftener. A descent of Vishnou is too often wished for in vain.'

As I did not object to the miracles because the common people could not understand them, neither did I object to the prophecies 'because of their meagreuess.' I could not see, and I cannot see, what either one or the other has to do with plain people in these days. We are not savages who must be confounded by legerdemain, nor are we of that class who tempt fate. We are men who should make fate—not weak girls, who go hang their hopes on fortune-telling. I told Mr. Fleming that I would accept Christianity, if morally consonant, without miracle or prophecy to recommend it; then why dwells he on points which I conceded? Is there but one track in which he can walk, can he not get beyond Keith and Paley? Must orthodox controversy pursue one mill-horse round for ever? He says mine is 'a strange mode of settling the truth of Christianity.' To him doubtless it is, who does not appear to have two ideas on the subject. Let us settle its morality first, and then its truthfulness will take care of itself.

Again: I submit deferentially that the question is not why did the Jews crucify Christ, but why was it needful that an exhibition so appalling should have been necessary in order to take away the sins of the world. If Mr. Fleming says it was not necessary, he indeed will meet me to some purpose, and I shall be but too happy to agree with him. My argument is that nothing of the kind could be necessary. In the eighteenth edition of the '*Logic of Death*' (p.15), the essay out of which this controversy arose, I have expressed my case, which I submit Mr. Fleming has not in any way invalidated.

Since we are made to be what we are by that inevitable necessity, whose currents set in before we began to exist, and which bear us along to our destiny, I argued that we cannot be accountable for our fate to Him from whose hands we are assured the issues of our life proceeded. Mr. Fleming declares this doctrine absurd and monstrous, and so it is when *he* states the inference from it. He makes it to appear that because men are not responsible to God, that there can be no obedience or gratitude exacted between man and man. But because God cannot well hold us guilty for being what he has made us to be, it surely does not follow that men may not exact that order necessary to their mutual protection, and expect that pleasure will be felt when happiness is conferred upon the miserable? Neither with God or men does this doctrine of necessity

interrupt government, it only interrupts punishment. Its moral lesson is to teach us how, by wise calculation, we may supersede punishment by making crime impossible. It is only when Mr. Fleming states this theory, that it is 'monstrous and absurd.' I may address that gentleman in the language of the author of the *Podesta*:—

'Look closer to't; you make the evil first—  
A base, then pile a heap of censures on it.  
'Tis your own sin supplies the scaffolding  
And mason work; you skilful rear the grim  
Unightly fabric; and there point, and say  
"How ugly is it." You meanwhile forget  
'Tis your own handy work.'

It would ill repay your courtesy, Mr. Editor, to extend this reply by a formal refutation of that remark which comes with such bad grace from Mr. Fleming, viz., that the tree of infidelity is not advantageously known by its fruit. What fruit has Christianity borne to us after its eighteen centuries of elaborate advocacy and divine support—with discord in all our churches, unfriendliness of spirit in its members, artifice in trade—with a league among crowns to put down liberty abroad—with oppression in politics at home—with ignorance among the people and misery everywhere? Is it a Christian who asks what fruits have infidelity borne, which has so rarely had free or fair play where Christians have had power to prevent it? In this country Christian magistrates refuse to take our oaths, and men of wealth who make a profession of atheism endanger their possessions. Wherever property has been left for the establishment of our opinions in London, Manchester, Cork, France, America, judges declared it left for an 'immoral' purpose, and the triumphant and nefarious Christian has carried it away for his own purposes. Whatever the testimony of a man's conscience may be, he must die under the profession of Christian name, or his relatives, if he die poor, may suffer. Every charity in the kingdom is in the receipt of contributions from infidels and atheists, the credit of which the Christian claims, because the donors must accept the Christian designation in order to preserve social status. The Christian refuses us the protection of the laws—he causes the law to deny us freedom while living, to plunder us when we are dead—and then he has the effrontery to turn round and demand what fruits has the tree of infidelity borne. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, it has often wrested civilisation from the despoiling hand of superstition. It has struggled for the education of the people, ever delayed by the jealousies or the fears of sects. It has discovered the presence of Law in mind which has made progress into a science, and has substituted Systematic Morality for that oriental declamation which has so long failed to reach human practice. In the person of Voltaire, infidelity, as Lamartine assured us, gave freedom to France. In the person of Paine, it gave independence to America. Thus the people in the Old World and the New have owed Liberty to two advocates of Infidelity; can Mr. Fleming say as much of any two Christian Ministers?

Before concluding, there is one acknowledgment due to Mr. Fleming, which I have no disposition to conceal or to moderate. When he has had to speak of me, he has not done it by inuendo, but mentioned me by name—so that I have known the exact amount of responsibility devolving on me to meet. When he has referred to my publications he has done it by quoting their titles, so that others might, if they pleased, refer to them also, and judge between us. This is a fairness not usual in our opponents. It is fearless in Mr. Fleming, and on these accounts, when *he* says he has no apprehension of the strength of our case or the progress of our opinions, I believe him; and I make no ungrudging acknowledgment of his honour and his courage in these respects.

Perhaps Mr. Fleming may care to write further, to explain something I may have misunderstood or represented inaccurately, or to supply some omission; in which case you, Mr. Editor, may fear, if I wish to answer such further communication, that there will be no end to the controversy you have done me the honour to permit. I therefore say that I do not wish to reply again upon this subject. Having been heard in my own defence, if I have not made my case good, it has been my fault not to have made better use of my opportunity; and I leave to my opponent, as I usually prefer to do, the last word.

G. JACOB HOLYOAKE.

## On the Sin of Going to Church.

BY JULIAN.

THE utter absence of life and vitality, which characterise the observance of the Sabbath and its ordinances, is a source of much deep regret to sincerely professing Christians. Believing that some spiritual efficacy is bound up in these observances, they must witness with inward grief what they account the gradual decay of religious feeling as exhibited in its established forms. For us to assume much sympathy with this grief would be as hypocritical as it is absurd. Erroneously based, however, as we believe this feeling to be, we dare assert there are few who have thrown off all reverence for established forms without a struggle, or who have not severally, at certain stages of their mental development, felt in a similar manner. Inasmuch as this feeling is almost invariably the precursor of inquiry, it ought to be favourably regarded. We witness its tendency in the plain speaking sincerity and earnest vigour of such minds as Newman, Foxton, Froude, Maurice, Kingsley, and others. Among formalists generally such views find no favour, and it is to excite inquiry among these that this address is written.

The arguments attempted to be drawn from Scripture for a Sabbath observance have been exposed and refuted so frequently that it were needless waste of time to enter upon the subject here. Many of the most learned divines and commentators within the church have shown that this embodiment of the Jewish ceremonial law is nowhere enjoined upon professing Christians.\* The letter of the Bible commands no such observance, and the spirit of the New Testament is in direct opposition to it.† The dogma that one day out of seven only is to be kept holy, is as absurd as it is profane. Founded as it is on a total misapprehension of what constitutes religious feeling, it seems

little wonderful that such an idea should be eagerly seized upon by many to establish, by flocking to this weekly spectacle, a claim to superior piety. But in vain may we expect in a man any clear perception of the 'beauty of holiness' who confines its exemplification to one day out of seven. If he does not do so, what then is meant by 'keeping holy the Sabbath day?' Is it by such a holiness as is to have no connection with other days? If so, what is this holiness worth, or rather, how comes he to call that holiness which may be put on and off with his Sunday suit? If it must have such a connection, we would simply inquire how he finds himself warranted in making a distinction between these six days and the seventh. By what most curious and recondite process does he reconcile it with his conscience to keeping *especially* holy one day out of seven, when he knows that he is equally bound to realise his highest idea of holiness every day of his life? The tendency of such an injunction is to degrade and deaden all religious feeling. Common sense must teach us, that a man who deems his exertions to be *principally* required against a certain day will, in spite of himself, show a corresponding laxity in conforming to the same principles throughout the week. If he shews no such laxity he keeps no Sabbath.

For how much mean selfishness and conventional cant is this church-going a cover and palliative, especially among the respectable classes! and how much longer is it that such precious mummery will be allowed to deceive even the most simple of us lookers on? From the importance attached to this observance by the 'saints,' one might imagine some wonderful effect followed these weekly visitations to what is termed the 'sanctuary.' A very slight experience would convince him of his error. He could not long witness the cool self-satisfied demeanour of your orthodox church-goer without becoming aware that he had committed some grievous mistake. None seem to desire, far less to expect, any change. Perhaps they think it is enjoined in Scripture; but whether or not, the priest, at all events,

\* Grotius, Bucer, Calvin, Pebo, Martyr, Musculus Ursinus, Gomarus, and more lately Dr. Paley, Dr. Lingard, Archbishop Whately, and others.

† 'The Mosaic Sabbath.' (Chapman & Hall, London.) 'No Sabbath in Christianity.' (Barlow, Newcastle-on-Tyne.)

enjoins it, and they rejoice thereat. It is a pleasant and a goodly thing when some show of piety, however trifling, attaches to an observance at once public and fashionable. Religion would be but a poor element after all, unless it were respectable, and made some display. Only through this and other spectacles is it recognised by formalists—and, indeed, without them would be esteemed altogether worthless. It is held in Scotland, that if a man is seen at kirk or market the week before his decease, he is accounted in good health, and in a competent state to make his will. By a parity of reasoning, these church-goes seem to imagine that a decent observance of this ceremony constitutes piety. On no other ground is it possible to account for their most regular and business-like attendance. We find in them no exemption of the spirit of Christianity. They have no idea of a religion influencing every day life, but the whole is comprehended in the observance of certain forms and a belief in certain dogmas. It has no connection with their social state, and any attention to the cure or alleviation of its evils forms no part of what they denominate their 'religious duties.' In the decay of such a religion all good men rejoice, and in the exposure and ridicule of its upholders it is time that all true men should aid. Nothing proves the soul-destroying effects of formalism more than the total absence of the slightest approach to enthusiasm, and the aversion to inquiry, which characterise its votaries. They profess a pious horror at any new ideas calculated to disturb their routine of vacuity, or occasion unpleasant reflections. They prefer being 'blind in public to seeing in secret.' Having succeeded perhaps in deceiving themselves, they at last come to deem it possible to deceive others with their round of conventionalities and weekly displays, their oracular utterance of unintelligible cant and saintly hypocrisy. Afraid, after all, to call their minds their own, it were surely expecting too much to imagine they could ever entertain even a moderate respect for the convictions of others. They do not love earnestness—why, indeed, should they? It is a restless, uncomfortable commodity, and savours, too, of change and innovation. Were

Christ now to appear on earth, these saints, who monopolise all the talk about him, would be the first to cry him down as a dreamer or turbulent fellow. In obedience to another dictum, and that other a man fallible as themselves, they have learnt to distrust their own inmost convictions and feelings. Carried on through life in a dull, soul-enslaving routine—bound, as they imagine, to believe a series of absurd and incomprehensible dogmas—their sympathies and aspirations become either wholly torpid, or find ample vent in some half-strangled form of joint-stock charity, on which they feel bound to engraft their own narrow sectarian ideas. Religion is a thing kept altogether apart from the shop or counter, the market or the exchange. Perhaps they have a dim kind of perception that the two would not work well together, at least not to what they conceive their worldly prosperity. Hence the fancy of having them in separate parcels.

Thus, from motives of cold and selfish prudence, stifling within themselves and ignoring in others the existence of our spiritual perceptions, we cease to wonder at the decay of religious observances. The upholders themselves have brought them into contempt. It may fairly be questioned whether such soulless hucksters in religious forms ever deceive each other, but certain it is they no longer deceive society. In the present day, the fact of one's regular attendance at church would fail to prepossess an intelligent mind in favour of his religious feeling or moral rectitude. For with none of these (thanks to the conventionalism of the saints) has church-going, even presumptively, the smallest connection. But with a world of intolerance and selfish hypocrisy, it has, singular to say, a very essential one. Show me a narrow-minded, sanctimonious saint, and you as certainly shew me a regular attender at church, perhaps a *quasi* 'respectable' man. Can any good motive induce my attendance or fellowship with such as these, or can I do so without violating my own moral consciousness? My natural position to such a man, or to such a class of men, is one of antagonism. Why should we partake their spiritual lethargy, or rather, why should we affect to do so? Let each, at all events, maintain intact

his own integrity. If we cannot always realise our conception of what is holy, just, and true, we shall still absolve us to ourselves as having sincerely striven to do so; but this superstitious mummery of conformity is as ruinous as it is degrading. If our life has no intrinsic value, it is absolutely worse than valueless when we lend our countenance to what is erroneous in theory and Pharisal in practice. A conformity such as these saints would wish is neither possible nor desirable. No good end is ever to be served by conscious dissimulation and hypocrisy. We cannot, with impunity, so tamper with ourselves. All forms are only useful in so far as they embody realities; and when they do so, it is the realities only that are prized. Forms are then unthought of, and are merely accidental, not insisted on. Among professing Christians, this order of things is now reversed. Possessing no longer in their souls the vitality which first originated them, each thinks to conceal his spiritual death by seizing on the forms, which he holds forth and observes as possessing life. But the time during which such shallow mockery can deceive others is fast passing away. A purer and more living faith than now animates the churches has begun to dawn among them. The epithets of infidel and atheist have lost their power to terrify or scare away inquiry. Some are even bold enough to contend that the only men deserving the name infidel are formalists and church-goers, who, lacking sincerity to inquire for themselves, are, if possible, even more unwilling than any one else should dare to do so.

As a means of moral and religious culture, the church has had its day, and it were folly to deny that it has doubtless done good work in its time. But no forms can long outlive the necessities which gave them birth. *Tempora mutabuntur et nos mutamur in illis.* The soul of man is destined successively to outgrow all forms. Bound strictly by none, it aspires constantly after the highest and purest ideal. Church attendance is rapidly becoming a thing of the past, and those minds are fast increasing who perceive and accept this fact. Neither need such as bewail this 'mourn as those without hope.' Casting aside as nought the prejudices of early religious training and association, calm and impartial reflection must sug-

gest that religious feeling is not tied down to manifest itself in church-attendance, or any other set form of worship. The spirit will not be so bound or dictated to. Only in proportion as religion is pure and spiritual is it independent of forms. It is said of Milton, that he grew old without visible worship. Yet scarcely the most ignorantly bigoted mind would deny to our prince of poets strong religious feelings. The conviction is slowly and steadfastly permeating all churches, that religion is of no church or creed.

He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things, both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us  
He made and loveth all.

When we see religious bodies attaching importance to certain forms, be sure they have already lost a portion of that spirit for which no forms will compensate. This spirit it rests with ourselves to evoke into true life, grandeur, and beauty. It can exist—it does exist—independent of all Prophets and Messiahs, Bibles or Korans. Inherent in the nature of man, its strength is only attainable in perfect freedom.

In no age could it necessarily follow that a man was destitute of religion who ceased to attend church; and in the present day there does not even exist such a presumption. Church-attendance is *not* a religious act, but only the simulation of what, under different times and circumstances, might have been so. What wonder if it has ceased to satisfy the wants and aspirations of the mass of inquiring minds? Within, all is dull, cold, and dead; without, all is busy, stirring, and progressive. No man, in full possession of his faculties, can hesitate in his choice. The church has isolated, and persists in isolating, itself. An eminent American writer\* has thus forcibly expressed himself on the anomalous position of the church in connection with this observance:—'It seemed strange that the people should come to church. It seemed as if their houses were very unentertaining, that they should prefer this thoughtless clamour. It shows that there is a commanding attraction in the moral sentiment that can lend a faint tint of light to dulness and ignorance, coming in its

\* Emerson.

place. The good hearer is sure that he has been touched—sometimes is sure that there is somewhat to be reached, and some word that can reach it. When he listens to these vain words, he comforts himself by their relation to his remembrance of better hours; and so they clatter and echo unchallenged.' To the dullness and ignorance here spoken of every intelligent man who has attended church can bear witness; but, with deference to Emerson, we must be allowed to doubt whether the commanding attraction of the moral sentiment would long avail to draw him thither. We quarrel not, however, with a description which, while charitably construing the good hearers' attendance, renders the observance itself sufficiently contemptible.

Milton, too, besides shewing how entirely destitute is this ceremony of any scripture authority, has pictured a state of things, quoted by the previous writer, the spirit of which is even truer in our own day than it could have possibly been in his time:—

'A wealthy man, addicted to his pleasures or to his profits, finds religion to be a traffic so entangled, and of so many pudding accounts, that of all mysteries he cannot skill to keep a stock going on that trade. What should he do? Fain he would have the name to be religious; fain he would bear up with his neighbours in that. What does he, therefore, but resolve to give over toiling, and to find himself out some factor to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his religious affairs—some divine of note and estimation that must be. To him he adheres; resigns the whole warehouse of his religion, with all the locks and keys, into his custody, and, indeed, makes the very person of that man his religion; esteems his associating with him a sufficient evidence and commendatory of his own piety. So that a man may say his religion is now no more within himself, but is become a dividual moveable, and goes and comes near him according as that good man frequents the house. He entertains him, gives him gifts, feeds

him, lodges him—his religion comes home at night, prays, is liberally supped, and sumptuously laid to sleep, rises, is saluted, and after the malmsey or some well-spiced beverage and better breakfast than he whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs between Bethany and Jerusalem, his religion walks abroad at eight, leaving his kind entertainer 'in the shop trading all day without his religion.'

The besetting sins of our social system are selfishness and conventionalism. Religion, as exemplified in established forms, is saturated with it. If our clergy possessed, as they assume to do, the office of divine teaching, they would bear in their lives and characters a commanding evidence of their divine mission. But it is needless to dilate upon their almost total incapacity. Following blindly the path prescribed by custom, ritual, and routine, they have lost all recognition of their spiritual office and dignity—they, in reality, no longer fill such an office. Their claims are either tacitly ignored or openly derided by all who, emancipated from sectarian influence, have ever seriously considered the subject. Neither is it so much their incapacity as their pretensions and insincerity which we laugh to scorn. It is their false position that subjects them to so much obnoxious criticism, against which their comparative insignificance would otherwise act as an effectual shield. What a monstrous hypocrisy is that system by which a certain class of men assume such high functions? or what greater folly than to imagine that the laying on of hands, and endorsement of the thirty-nine articles, or the confession of faith, can constitute any claim in the eyes of liberal men. Judged by that high standard of moral and religious sentiment which we trace in all truly great minds who, as poets and philosophers, have been in reality the benefactors and elevators of their species, how will these servile imitators stand comparison? The bare idea of such a comparison is sufficiently ridiculous, and no one in his heart ever seriously makes it.

[To be concluded in the next number.]

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

### A PETITION CONCERNING QUEENWOOD.

SIR,—By order of the Central Board I forward the enclosed, requesting that the same may be inserted in the *Reasoner*.

At a meeting of the Central Board, held on July 2nd, 1851, it was resolved 'That the petition now read be adopted and forwarded to Mr. Roebuck for presentation, and that copies be sent to the editors of the *Sheffield Free Press*, the *Reasoner*, and the *Leader*, for insertion in their papers; that copies be also sent to Sir I. L. Goldsmid, Messrs. Finch, Green, Clegg, Owen, Bracher, Edmondson, Ashurst, Atkinson & Co., Buxton, and the Promoters of Christian Socialism; and that a petition be prepared for presentation by the Branches.'

THOMAS WHITAKER, Hon. Fin. Sec.

'To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in parliament assembled, the petition of the central board of the Rational Society, enrolled under 10 George IV., and 4 and 5 William IV.,

'Sheweth,—That in 1835, Robert Owen commenced a society for the practical carrying out of his views on co-operation.

'That in 1837, the rules for the government of the society were agreed upon at a general meeting of delegates from various parts of the country, signed among others by Robert Owen and John Finch, and copies were sent to J. Tidd Pratt, for enrolment and certificate, and were certified and enrolled accordingly.

'That by the said rules the name of the society was declared to be the "National Community Friendly Society."

'That at the annual congress of the society, held in 1838, the said rules were revised, and other copies, signed by Robert Owen, John Finch, and William Pare among others, were sent as before for enrolment and certificate, and were certified and enrolled accordingly.

'That at the annual congress of the society, held in 1843, it was unanimously agreed, amongst other things, that the name of the society should be "The Rational Society," and the altered rules were enrolled and certified as before.

'That after the first enrolment of the society, in 1837, upwards of sixty branches, numbering altogether some thousands of members (principally working men), were formed in various cities and towns of England and Scotland; namely, amongst others, in London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bolton, Stockport, Bristol, Huddersfield, Halifax, Blackburn, Bradford, Leeds, Worcester, Macclesfield, Coventry, Oldham, Bath, Rochdale, Leicester, Ashton, Sheffield, Doncaster, Great Yarmouth, Hull, Wigan, Preston, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Cheltenham, Brighton, Chatham, Sunderland, Darlington, Norwich, Reading, Stourbridge, Northampton, Derby, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, and Dundee.

'That after the said first enrolment the members began to subscribe money to carry out the objects of the society on the faith of its principles, the good character of its leaders, and the perfect legality of all the steps that were taken.

'That at the annual congress, held in 1839, the said John Finch, of Liverpool, iron merchant; William Clegg, of Cheetham Hill, Manchester, merchant; and Charles Frederic Green, of London, gentleman, were appointed trustees of the society and lessees of an estate at Queenwood, in the county of Hants, which had

just then been taken of Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid, on behalf of the society, and the sum of £37,794 was raised and afterwards expended upon the said estate.

‘That at the annual congress of 1840 the draft of a trust deed, prepared by W. H. Ashurst, of Cheapside, London, the society’s solicitor, was considered and ordered to be completed forthwith.

‘That the said John Finch has written many letters and addresses, from time to time, in the *New Moral World*, which was the weekly publication of the society, declaring his utmost confidence in the experiment, and urging the members to come forward liberally with their subscriptions; that besides being lessee and trustee as aforesaid, he has been the president of the society and signed scrip in that capacity; that he has been president of the congress on various occasions, and governor of the community established at Queenwood, as aforesaid, and that he insured the said estate in the name of ‘John Finch and others, trustees.’

‘That, from an official account rendered to the annual congress in 1845, it appeared that the sum of £37,794 had been subscribed and lent by the members, benefit societies, and others; and the property was valued at £25,676, leaving a deficit of £14,239, after deducting £2,121, being the amount of liabilities to various tradesmen.

‘That, in consequence of this deficiency, it was unanimously agreed, on the 16th of July, 1845, by the congress (the said lessees and trustees concurring) to assign the property to John Buxton, Frederic Bate, and George Bracher, in trust for the benefit of the creditors of the society.

‘That the said assignees forthwith proceeded to compel the members of the society who were located on the estate, with their families, to leave it, and begin the world again as best they might; that they also proceeded to make arrangements for a sale of the whole estate, which was duly advertised to take place on the 5th December, 1845; and that the said John Finch then interfered, a few days before the sale was to have taken place, and forbade it.

‘That the said John Finch afterwards requested a special congress to be called, to consider the best mode of proceeding, which was accordingly done.

‘That, at the said special congress, which was held in April, 1846, the said John Finch attended and took his seat as an ex-officio member, by virtue of being trustee of the society, as aforesaid; that he also moved and signed resolutions upon which he spoke; and that the congress confirmed the assignment made, as aforesaid, at the previous congress, and, by resolution, requested the said Robert Owen and William Pare to confer with the said lessees and assignees, in order that a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the whole affair might be made.

‘That, in the following month of May, 1846, the said John Finch went down to the said estate of the society at Queenwood, and at night, along with others, broke into a part of the building well known throughout the country as *Harmony Hall*, and took there from the official books, papers, documents, agreements, and correspondence belonging to the society, and afterwards boasted that all the members of the society were in his power.

‘That, at the annual congress of the society held in 1844, the said John Buxton was appointed president of the society and governor of the community, and had possession of the property in that capacity; and that, after his appointment as one of the aforesaid assignees, he continued to hold possession by request of his co-assignees.

‘That, on the 9th June, 1846, the said John Finch headed a party of agricultural labourers, and forcibly ejected the said John Buxton from the estate, and also



forcibly turned his wife and children out upon the highway, where they all encamped for the space of several weeks, until a meeting of creditors and all parties interested had been held, to decide on what was best to be done under the circumstances.

‘That the said meeting was called for the 29th of June, 1846, and the said John Finch, by public advertisement, forbade the parties to meet upon the said estate, and threatened all who came upon it that they would be liable for trespass, and also stated in the advertisements that it was believed the principal object of calling the meeting was to afford an excuse for parties to congregate together *and commit a breach of the peace.*

‘That the meeting was therefore held at Rose Hill, a place adjoining the said estate, and the said William Pare attended and moved certain resolutions as and for the said John Finch, which were passed without any opposition by the meeting.

‘That, immediately after the meeting, the said John Buxton left the estate, and it has since been in the possession of the said John Finch, and of one George Edmondson, who now holds it.

‘That no account whatever has since been rendered to the society, nor any moneys paid over to the members, nor has any statement whatever been made of what is intended to be done with respect to the said property.

‘That, from correspondence which has been published, it appears that the said John Finch acted, and is acting, under the advice of the said W. H. Ashurst, and of Messrs. Atkinson and Sanders, Manchester, solicitors.

‘That one of your petitioners received a letter, on the 18th May, 1846, from the said John Finch, in which he stated his opinion to be that the property of the society was fairly worth from £18,000 to £20,000.

‘That your petitioners, being publicly and prominently connected with the said society, have received very many affecting letters, at various times, from poor working men, in almost all parts of the country, urging them to take effectual steps to obtain a settlement of the society’s affairs, and to get them the money which they had subscribed, the non-possession of which was entailing cruel hardships upon them.

‘That your petitioners have called upon the said Robert Owen to interfere and obtain a settlement, but that he refused to do so.

‘That your petitioners have done all in their power to bring about a settlement by moral means, not being able to see that much real benefit was likely to result by any proceedings at law.

‘That your petitioners are unable to state whether a trust deed was ever executed or not, inasmuch as the papers and documents of the society were improperly taken out of their possession as aforesaid; and, as they are thus debarred from all access to the accounts, they cannot ascertain from a perusal of the bill of the said W. H. Ashurst any information relative to the execution of the said deed.

‘That the specious and plausible promises held out to the members to subscribe their hard-earned money in order to benefit their condition, the number of poor members in all parts of the country who were inveigled by those promises, the extent of their subscriptions, the utter non-fulfilment of the promises or return of any of the money, and the wide-spread calamity which has been the result, are facts which loudly call for the interference of your honourable house.

‘That, as your honourable house has ordered an inquiry to be made into the affairs of the National Land Company, from which much good appears likely to result, it is the opinion of your petitioners that a similar result would be effected

by an inquiry into the affairs of the Rational Society, and the circumstances of the case strongly warrant such an inquiry.

'Your petitioners therefore pray that your honourable house will forthwith order an inquiry to be made into the affairs of the Rational Society before a committee of your honourable house, and that your petitioners, in common with other members thereof, may be heard in support of the allegations herein contained, in order that justice may be done to all parties interested.

'And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.'

[Since the discontinuance of the *Herald of Progress*, the *Reasoner* has represented the gentlemen with whom the above petition originates, and therefore insertion is given to it just as it is received. The tone in which it is expressed is to be regretted. In vindicating one division of Socialists, the honour of the party should not be forgotten. The same facts, which indeed ought to be told, might have been expressed with more dignity and more effect; and that best principle of Socialism, which teaches us to impute no evil intention to others, especially those who have been our colleagues, should have given a different tone to it. Had I known anything of the preparation of the petition (which I did not till I received it on a printed slip), I should have pleaded for its entire revision. The *Leader* observes that the petition will lead people to suppose that the acts complained of are to be ascribed to the legal advice sought,' and adds, that 'of Messrs Atkinson and Sanders it knows nothing [which is also true of the *Reasoner*], but that the character of Mr. Ashurst is so unquestionable, that the public will ascribe the implication of his name to a feeling of partisanship or misapprehension.' In these remarks I fully concur, and I will say more, that the same is true of Mr. Owen and Mr. Pare; nor is there any reason to believe that any person mentioned disparagingly has acted from any other than fair intention, however unhappy the result has been. However agreeing with the truth of the prayer of the petition, I dissent with extreme regret from the tone adopted, which will not further justice, but expose a noble cause to the derision of its enemies.—G. J. H.]

#### H Y M N O F L O V E .

There is no Heaven but Love;  
All things that live and move  
Are upheld by its breath,  
And it is master of the bands of death.

It makes the weak heart strong,  
The songless gush with song!  
And spreads the earth with flowers,  
And builds enchanted palaces and bowers.

It claimeth for its own  
Each lovely tint and tone,  
And maketh Beauty seem  
The semblance of its own delighted dream.

And vocal to its ear  
Dumb stars and solar sphere—  
Their muffled music comes  
In grandeur, rushing like the roll of drums.

It sees a mystic sense—  
A language deep, intense—  
In the grass blades and weeds;  
And floods of glory o'er the silent meads.

It maketh women's eyes  
Star-blossoms, mysteries!

And, in celestial sheen,  
Arrays their loveliness of form and mien.

It decks the virgin bride,  
Paining her balmy side  
With odorous pangs, which start  
To blissful music all her throbbing heart.

All things full well it knows;  
And wheresoe'er it goes  
Music and flowers attend,  
And dark, brute forms rejoice, and call it friend.

All the great works of man  
Are built upon its plan;  
It paints, and carves the stone,  
And the high realms of Phantasy doth own.

And Love, one day, shall reign  
O'er hill and vale and plain;  
And all the land and sea  
Shall own the triumph of his sovereignty!

G. S. P., in the *Truth Seeker*  
for April, 1851.

## Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 268, 349s.—Friend of Reason (who resumes his subscription of 5s. weekly) for August, 20s.—Arthur Trevelyan (further subscription) 40s.—E., Sheffield, and friend, 2s. 6d.—Charles McKim, Whitehaven, 2s. 6d.—William McKim, do., 2s. 6d.—James Julian, do., 2s.—George Foster, do., 1s.—W. S., do., 1s.—William Wilson, do., 2s.—John Leennan, do., 6d.—John Laughlin, do., 1s.—Peter Lennon, do., 1s.—William Thompson, do., 1s.—By sale of *Truth Seeker*, presented by Dr. Lees, 9s. [Jobert's 'Philosophy of Geology,' price 3s. 6d., given by Dr. Lees, may be had at our office.]—W. E. B., 10s.—William Jervis, Shelton, 1s.—William Woolley, do., 1s.—B. S. (per Mr. Watson), 10s.—Henry Clark (per Mr. Hagen, Derby), 2s. 6d.—James Smith, Paisley, 6d.—A Constant Reader (per Mr. Love, Glasgow), 10s.\*—Edward Search, 19s. 6d.—E. B. (per Mrs. Watson), 10s.—Secularist, 6d.—W. B., Rochdale, 6d.; G. R. Vine, 1s.—James Spurr, Liverpool, 2s. 6d.—J. Burnley, Heckmondwike, 6d.—Richard Hunt, Hyde, 1s. 6d.—William Holyoak, Leicester, 1s. 6d.—E. W. (per Mrs. Watson), 2s. 6d.—R. R., 1s. 6d.—O. J., Huddersfield, 1s.—J. Allen, Leicester, 6d.—F. W. Camden, 6d.—Mr. H., Wandsworth, 1s.—L. J., do., 1s.—E. C., Brierly Hill, 5s.—Lucius, Dorset, 1s.—Fact, 2s. 6d.—John Bates, Northampton (annual), 1s.—Total, 529s.

\* Through oversight, this has not been acknowledged before.

## GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.—August 3rd [7½], Ernest Jones, 'Aristocracy and the Irish Census.'—5th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.'

Hall of Science, City Road.—August 3rd [7½], a Lecture.

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—August 3rd, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

South London Hall, Corner of Wehber Street, Blackfriars Road.—August 3rd [7½], C. Southwell, 'Young, Gray, Boyce, Thompson, and Churchill.'

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Arcopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

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## Our Open Page.

THE late Dyce Sombre was understood to be the son of a German adventurer in India, of the name of Summer, who espoused the late Begum Oomroo. All manner of wild and scandalous stories are afloat as to the life of this woman and the death of her husband. It seems not to be quite certain whether Mr. Dyce Sombre was the real or only the adopted child; but, be that as it may, upon the death of his father the Begum transferred her maternal affections, such as they were, to the son of the German, who was educated, it is said, by a Protestant clergyman, although the old lady herself by turns professed herself a Catholic and a Mahometan—having actually built a cathedral and a mosque, with the intention of having two strings to her bow [a wise woman this]. After her demise Mr. Dyce Sombre came to Europe, and first made himself remarkable, in Italy, by the extraordinary black marble monument which he caused to be executed and sent to India in memory of his benefactress. His subsequent life in England has already been noticed. In consequence of his death in a state of lunacy, his money in the funds, railway shares, and other property, of the annual value of £11,000, will become divisible between Captain Troup and General Soldrolì, the husbands of his two sisters, who are next of kin. An additional sum, producing £4,000 a year, will also fall to their families on the death of Mrs. Dyce Sombre.

A meeting of the creditors of Messrs. Finch and Willey, of the Windsor foundry, Liverpool, has been held at the Clarendon Rooms, when it appeared, from the statement of accounts submitted, that the total liabilities of the firm were £65,000, and it was calculated that the assets would realise 10s. in the pound. Mr. E. Finch stated that eighteen months ago, on the retirement of Mr. Smith, who is a creditor for £7,000, there was a loss of £6,000 on the concern, and that the completion of contracts then on hand had since established a further loss of £7,000. The Bank of Liverpool is well secured, as also Charles Geach, Esq., M.P., of Birmingham, who had advanced £10,000 on account of Chepstow bridge; but the creditors of Finch and Son are also creditors to this estate to upwards of £20,000. A committee was appointed to wind up the estate as speedily as possible.

We read among newspaper foreign news that a *Gazette*, from which the following is taken, has been received:—Luh-keen-ying, Governor of the Kieu nan and Keang se provinces, in a memorial to the throne, dated the 10th of February, says—All sects of false religion burn incense, fast and live upon vegetable diet to gather money. Amongst such the Roman Catholics are notorious, worshipping the cross, and caring alike neither for heaven nor for ancestors. Under the cloak of religion they transgress the law. To put the people in good paths is requisite to demolish bad religions, and put forward good ones. The classics should be taught to every one, even to the peasants, and then no error would find entrance.

'The Difficulty Solved, or the Government of the People by Themselves,' noticed two numbers since, is published by Watson in London. Omitting to say so, has caused inquiries as to how it can be obtained.

The Essay entitled, 'The Philosophic Type of Religion, as developed by Professor Newman (in "The Soul, Her Sorrows and Her Aspirations,") Stated, Examined, and Answered, by G. J. Holyoake,' will shortly be ready in a separate form.

We have pleasure in stating that Mr. Watson has returned home from Cumberland very much improved in health by his excursion.

# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## THE 'CRITIC' AND R. W. EMERSON.

AN article appeared in the last number of the *Critic* upon R. W. Emerson, which is so offensive to good taste, and so gross a slander upon Emerson's character, both as a man and a writer, that I must crave your indulgence to say a few words in reply. The author of the article is evidently a very young man—not without talent—who owes much of his literary culture to Emerson, and a good deal of his ill nature, presumption, and egotism to his creed. He confesses that he was once an admirer, in some sort a student, of Emerson; not that he ever plunged into his master's 'fatal negations, or thought meanly of Jesus Christ,' but that he was a listener at Gamaliel's feet, and looked with a child's delight upon the painted flowers on Gamaliel's robe. It was the garment of the man, not the man himself, his refined speculations and practical wisdom, which attracted this darling boy; and now that he has grown out of his teens, and grown into a kind of mongrel orthodoxy, he is anxious to let the world know how much his youthful mind was misled by Emerson, and how very dangerous a person he considers him to be. One can very well afford to pardon such a statement as this, and even to thank an honest man for showing cause why he changes his opinions upon important and disputed subjects: but it is but fair that a plea of this kind should be manly and even-handed, that it should not be a piece of cunning special pleading, and least of all, that it should not be abusive and dishonest. If I have a competent antagonist to meet, who is a man of probity and character, it is my duty to give him the fullest benefit of his position; and I deserve no thanks for this simple act of justice: but if, knowing his character, I seek to traduce him before my audience, and to prejudice their minds against him, in order that I may gain a better and more acceptable hearing for myself, I am not only a quack but a scoundrel. Far be it from me to charge the writer in the *Critic* with these moral delinquencies, although there is much in the statement of his case which has an oblique look with it. He shall speak for himself, however. Alluding to the probable causes of what he is pleased to call the declining influence of Emerson in this country, he says: 'In the first place, his appearance disappointed many; they did not meet the rapt, simple, dreaming enthusiast, of whom they had been dreaming. They met instead, a calm, cold friend, down eyed, uncertain-seeming Yankee, whose every step was an apology, whose voice seldom seemed to quiver under the access of deep earnestness, and whose eye at times, even round the rich pea of his eloquence, shot out a basilisk glance, which reminded you of your serpent lurking and looking down far amid the thick summer of a forest tree. The late David Scott, the painter, was, we know, one of the many who were disappointed and shaken by the petty, cringing, and, on the whole, insincere aspect of Emerson, and his portrait of him is even more than usual with him a portrait of what the man should have been, and not of what he is.'

Secondly, his lectures were chiefly *double entendres*. There were alike commissions and omissions in them, which proved this to a certainty. 'We have seen him scanning an audience, ere he resolved which of two lectures he should give. . . . . We have heard of him, too, sacrificing to suit an audience, the principle, pith, marrow, and meaning of a whole lecture, as if in quoting the words, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, he had silyly, and *sat voce*, substituted the little word *not*. Nay, even when there was no such concealment, or subtraction, there was a game of *hide and seek* continually going on—a use of scriptural phrases in an unscriptural sense, a trimming and turning and terror at the prejudices of his audience altogether unworthy of his genius.'

Such is the preface to the crude and puerile criticism which this writer passes upon Emerson; and it will be confessed by all competent men, whether friends or foes, who have heard and seen Emerson, that a grosser libel could not very well have been written. Emerson's person is certainly not cast in the most classic moulds, nor is there anything very remarkable or prepossessing in his general appearance. He is a common-looking Yankee man—tall, fair, calm, and self-possessed, with the culture and manners of a gentleman. But his calmness is not ice, nor does it spring from a cold, unimpassioned nature, but is partly constitutional, and partly the result of a rigid and lofty discipline. To a person like our critical friend, who is so evidently inflammable, and who, like all youths of his stamp, dwells, and to all appearance will continue to dwell for some time yet to come, in what Emerson calls the *superlative state*, one cannot wonder that Emerson should appear tame and frigid; for he is none of your hale fellows, well-met, cannot drink and swear, but respects himself, and would keep his 'own island inviolate.' From personal knowledge of Emerson, I can say that I never met with a fairer or a more beautiful soul in any man than in him; and he has left memories round my hearthstone which will remain there like household gods, so long as I and mine exist. His private manners are simple, winning, and fascinating, and he has found a home in some of the noblest English hearts, which is the best criterion of his worth. The down-look which our friend the critic charges against Emerson, as if he were a pickpocket, is not for such as he to comprehend. But I may say, that a man whose mind is always occupied with those high concerns, about which our critic *talks* so much, is not likely to be a vulgar gazer; nor can a nervous, sensitive man always look a rude and brazen braggart in the face. His averted eye and silent demeanour are the best rebuke to such a person. But as for the 'basilisk glance,' and the malignant (I think this is the word) figure about the serpent, they are false, and few men of any pretensions to literature, to say nothing of *Christian* charity, could have been found in England to utter such uncourteous and disgraceful words. They are, however, apiece with the rest of this performance. And not content with blacking the features of Emerson with his own Stygian brush, he must needs call from the tomb the spirit of a great, noble-hearted, and high-minded man—David Scott—to bear witness to his skill. Poor Scott! how he would tremble with emotion, and deep indignation, if he could hear such words as 'petty cringing' and 'insincerity of aspect,' applied to Emerson under the sanction of his venerable name. All this story about Scott and Emerson's portrait is false. I remember very well at my first, and, alas! last interview with David Scott, in company with Dr. Samuel Brown of Edinburgh, how generously and affectionately he spoke of Emerson, after I had been into his studio and seen Emerson's portrait. I remember, also, that we spoke about the portrait itself, which, so far

from being an ideal representation, in the offensive sense which this critic speaks of, was a perfect embodiment of the internal and external man, Emerson. Scott could not have taken pains to hide the 'insincere aspect' of Emerson, to soften down his 'petty cringing,' for if he had had any idea that these base features were any part of Emerson's character, he would never have painted the canvass with his portrait. Of all men that I have ever known, Scott was the greatest hater of seeming, and was utterly incapable of fraud. He could neither paint, nor speak, nor act lies; and Emerson sat for his portrait at Scott's own request. It is well known, too, that Scott did not like portrait painting, and considered it below the region of that high art to which he aspired. He is not likely therefore to have invited Emerson to sit to him, if he had thought of him as this critic states he did. Those who knew Emerson best, loved him most. So far from having an 'insincere aspect,' his whole manners and appearance in private life were open and noble. Whosoever could look into the eyes of Emerson, and charge him with insincerity, must himself be a very questionable character, and I, for one, would not trust him with change for a farthing. The truth is, that many persons, like this of the *Critic*, had looked for an earthly king in the new Messiah, and were disappointed, like the gross and sensual Jews, that his person was not equal to their expectations. They were ignorant that the spirit is no respecter of form, but dwells alike resplendent in Jesus and in Socrates. They wanted an Apollo to show in their drinking rooms, as the lion of a season; and because he was but a plain country gentleman, and could not fall in with their humour of good fellowship, and talk literary scandal with them, they thought they could mar his character by playing the Billingsgate bully against him.

I am really sorry and pained to use such language as this; but it is true, and I believe the occasion calls for it. The charge of *double entendres*, which follows next in the catalogue of this critic's budget of falsehood, would be below notice if it were not calculated to do harm where Emerson is not known. That he frequently uses old theological terms with new meanings there can be no doubt, but that he ever used them with an intention to deceive, or 'pander to the prejudices of his audience, is not true. No one but a person wilfully blind, could mistake him in this respect. These old-fashioned terms hide deep truths, which Emerson recognised, although not in the limited sense which theologians understand by them; and he showed these theologians that their own terminology had a universal meaning, and that he had a right to use it in giving utterance to his thoughts. But if any man were deceived by these utterances, it was his own fault; for the bold denial of theological dogma which accompanied them, was proof sufficient that Emerson was playing no double game. Neither did he ever sacrifice the whole 'pith, principle, marrow, and meaning of his discourse to suit his audience;' but he was a man of discernment, and often hesitated which of two lectures he should give, that he might give the one best adapted to their capacity; for he had learned the melancholy truth, that English audiences generally were deficient in culture, and utterly unable to appreciate his best discourses. And because he was too wise to throw his pearls before hogs, he is set down by this critic as a sneak and a liar; and I can only account for so extraordinary a delusion, by supposing that the said critic sees the reflex of his own moral visage in that of Emerson, and mistakes the one for the other. So I leave him.

JANUARY SEARLE.

## THE WORKS OF DR. LEES.

A SUBSCRIPTION EDITION has been announced of the works of Dr. Lees, collected, revised, and edited by the author—including some valuable treatises never before published, on temperance, dietetics, vegetarianism, national education, criticism, and biblical exegesis. All the texts and contexts of Scripture bearing on the wine controversy will be chronologically displayed, with various translations, ancient, modern, and original, each text illustrated with notes.

The final arrangements respecting the form, plan, and contents of the works of Dr. Lees, have now been made, and it only remains that the friends of the project for their publication should complete their canvass for subscribers. They will contain an accurate portrait of the author, engraved by Linton, several illustrative engravings and diagrams, and a beautifully coloured picture of St. Martin's stomach in health and disease.

The entire edition will be published, uniform, in three volumes, post octavo, neatly and firmly bound and lettered, price to subscribers 16s. This edition will be divided into two series—either of which may be ordered separately. Volumes 1 and 2 will form the first, or 'Temperance,' series—including the discussions and essay on diet, temperance, physiology, and the Scriptural wine question, price to subscribers, 10s.

The second, or *Truth-seeker*, series, containing the philosophical and exegetical essays, and a popular system of logic, or the method, means, and matter of argument, will form the third volume, price 6s. Subscribers' copies will be issued as early in the summer of 1851 as possible, and be forwarded, carriage free, to all the large towns.

After the subscription list is closed, the three volumes can only be obtained together, and the price will be advanced to £1.

Names of subscribers will be received by the secretary of the publication committee, or by any of the following gentlemen:—Mr. Cunliffe, Temperance Hall, Bolton; Mr. Newcombe, Temperance Office, Leicester; Mr. Rae, 30, St. Enoch's Square, Glasgow; Mr. J. C. Booth, Temperance Missionary, Huddersfield; John Guest, Esq., Moorgate, Rotherham; Joseph Cowen, jun., Esq., Blaydon, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Frederick Hopwood, Esq., Hull; Mr. C. Tisdall, jun., 5, Church-Street, Kensington, London; Mr. W. Gawthorpe, 52, Princes Street, Manchester; Mr. G. J. Holyoake, *Reasoner* Office.

The following gentlemen are subscribers, and will permit their names to be placed on the committee:—Dr. Gourley, London; A. Courtney, Esq., Surgeon, R.N., Ramsgate; James Gaskill, Esq., Hulme, Manchester; William Bradley, Esq., Stockport; John Balbirnie, Esq., M.A., M.D., Grafenburg House, Malvern; the Rev. Lawrence Panting, M.A., Vicar of Chebsey.

T. H. BARKER, Secretary.

Central Committee Office, 52, Princes Street, Manchester.

## INTIMATIONS.

NEXT week Mr. Holyoake will resume his Provincial Reports, continuing with Dundee and the visit to the Rev. George Gilfillan's chapel.

The *Lancaster Guardian* has inserted all Mr. Holyoake's letters; and a writer in the *Lancaster Gazette*, who is scandalised that so much public discussion should be held on the subject, has himself commenced in that journal 'Letters on Infidelity.' Mr. Holyoake will reply to him.



### Examination of the Press.

THE 'TIMES' AND THE TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.—The Association for the Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge have issued a circular, dated July 28th, requesting that all petitions for the above object be sent in immediately, as in a few days Mr. Milner Gibson will call the attention of the House of Commons to the subject. The circular is accompanied by a Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons—very favourable to the repeal of the taxes; also with a reprint from the *Times* of July 26th, from which we extract the following remarks:—'The Select Committee on Newspaper Stamps have delivered themselves of their opinion with commendable brevity, plainness, and force. Beginning with a review of the law, whether relating to stamps or to transmission of papers by post, they notice some singular inconsistencies and ambiguities, sufficiently and painfully familiar to all who are interested in the press. Their recommendations are simple and decisive. They propose to abolish the stamp; to substitute a postage for newspapers and all other printed matter, not exceeding a penny for a weight equal to that of the largest existing newspaper; and to protect the original publishers of intelligence with a short privilege of copyright. These recommendations are as just to ourselves and other purveyors of intelligence as they are conducive to the public convenience. It is a matter of common sense about as undeniable as any axiom in science, that the abolition of a very onerous tax must be a benefit both to the producer and to the consumer; and our own experience certainly has not led us to a different conclusion.....The committee observes, and it is almost a truism, that apart from fiscal considerations, public intelligence can hardly be a matter which it is desirable to tax. It would, indeed, be strange if it were. A tax on news is nothing more or less than a tax on the use of the eyes and the ears, a tax on the employment of the mind, a tax on the improvement of the understanding, a tax on knowledge, a tax on events, a tax on our social existence, on our common interests, and our mutual sympathies. The royal assent has just been given to the abolition of a tax on those useful apertures through which we admit the light of the sky, the vital air, and the sight of the world around us. What, indeed, could be said for a tax which operated as an inducement to sit in the dark, to stop ventilation, and to shut out the face of nature and of man? But only next to that is a tax which operates in precisely the same manner on the apertures of the mind. Consider how it works. A fearful epidemic invades the country—a man must pay a penny for being acquainted with the fact; it approaches his town—another penny for that piece of information; it may be averted by preventives and mitigated by remedies—any accession to his knowledge on these critical points is charged a penny more; Her Majesty opens Parliament with a speech containing some important intimations—he is taxed a penny for reading it; a statesman makes a speech announcing a great policy—every reader pays his penny for being edified thereby; a colliery accident destroys a hundred men, and scatters misery over the land—the colliers of the next parish must pay a penny to profit by the caution; it is a penny to be forewarned of an eclipse, or to have it explained. This of course is thoroughly indefensible, except on the old familiar ground, that money must be got one way or another. *Post nummus virtus*. First the Treasury, then public improvement. It appears that the tax raises about £350,000 a-year. Whether any considerable portion of that could be procured by a penny stamp on such papers, and such only, as pass through the post, every time of their transmission, is more than we can venture to say.'

THE LONDON CITY MISSION.—Ogle Street District is probably the most influential one in the whole of the metropolis. It is the centre of infidel organisation for the kingdom at large. In most of the cities and towns of our native land where infidelity prevails its influence may be distinctly traced. This arises from the fact that so many of its inhabitants attend, or are connected with, the John Street infidel hall, or 'Literary Institution' as it is called. The well-known infidel organisation termed 'The West End London Shoemakers' make this their place of rendezvous. In politics they are Chartists of the Democratic Socialist order, and professedly they meet to discuss political questions; but atheism, deism, or scepticism in some of its forms, is usually mixed up with every political debate. A Christian's blood well nigh runs cold with horror at the blasphemies which are sometimes uttered here. When the writer visited this place to ascertain how its attendants were employed on a Sabbath evening, he found from 200 to 300 individuals present. At the doors stood a person with a large supply of cheap atheistical, infidel, and democratic publications, for which there was a ready sale. The 'service' in this 'infidel chapel' was commenced with the aid of the melody of a fine-toned organ, which aided a choir of 12 male and female singers, while they sung a hymn to the praises of infidel Socialism. Then followed a lecture which, according to the announcement, was on 'Mazzini and the Patriots of Italy,' but which, in reality, was only an argument to degrade the Lord Jesus, by attempting to prove that such men as Mazzini, Carlyle, Tom Paine [such is Christian courtesy], and Robert Owen, were quite equal to Him, and were, indeed, 'the Christs of the world!'—*Ninth Annual Report of the London City Mission.*

THE SCEPTIC EXPLAINED.—Belief consists in accepting the affirmations of the soul; unbelief in denying them. Some minds are incapable of scepticism. The doubts they profess to entertain are rather a civility or accommodation to the common discourse of their company. They may well give themselves leave to speculate, for they are secure of a return. Once admitted to the heaven of thought, they see no relapse into night, but infinite invitation on the other side. Heaven is within heaven, and sky over sky, and they are encompassed with divinities. Others there are to whom the heaven is brass, and it shuts down to the surface of the earth. It is a question of temperament, or of more or less immersion in nature. The last class must needs have a reflex or parasite faith; not a sight of realities, but an instinctive reliance on the seers and believers of realities. The manners and thoughts of believers astonish them, and convince them that these have seen something which is hid from themselves. But their sensual habit would fix the believer to his last position, while he as inevitably advances; and presently the unbeliever, for love of belief, turns the believer. Great believers are always reckoned infidels, impracticable, fantastic, atheistic, and really men of no account. The spiritualist finds himself driven to express his faith by a series of scepticisms. Charitable souls come with their projects, and ask his co-operation. How can he hesitate! It is the rule of mere comity and courtesy to agree where you can, and to turn your sentence with something auspicious; and not freezing and sinister. But he is forced to say, 'O, these things will be as they must be; what can you do? These particular griefs and crimes are the foliage and fruit of such trees as we see growing. It is vain to complain of the leaf or the berry; cut it off, it will bear another just as bad. You must begin your cure lower down.' The generousities of the day prove an intractable element for him. The people's questions are not his; their methods are not his; and against all the dictates of good nature, he is driven to say, he has no pleasure in them.—*Emerson.*

## On the Sin of Going to Church.

BY JULIAN.

[Concluded from last number.]

FORMALISTS and sectarians of every description are a drag and incubus on the progress of society, and the decadence of such a church with such upholders is a thing rather to be rejoiced in. There are few men with but an ordinary share of intelligence and candour that do not, could they confess it, feel half ashamed to countenance by their attendance the performance of this weekly farce. We may allow that one man out of a thousand may justifiably be seen attending church. A useful lesson may be taught, and many wholesome ideas suggested, by witnessing the barrenness, formality, and saintly affectation, characteristic of these Sabbath assemblies of so-called Christians. To moralise over such a spectacle may be productive of good. Yet surely it were better that the occasion for such reflections were done away with, and that the remaining nine hundred and ninety-nine betook themselves to manifesting the spirit of Christianity in their most inward thoughts and actions, instead of a parrot-like repetition of the sayings of its founders. Of their own soul these followers of routine are intensely ignorant; and yet of God they can talk with a glibness and flippancy bordering on the profane. Now of themselves they might know much, and the more they do know, the less will be their estimation of creeds and dogmas—still less will they be disposed to prate and gabble of that spirit which now they neither know nor feel.

We have stated that there is not a shadow of authority in scripture for this observance, and referred inquirers to two works recently published which appear decisive on this point. It is not now our intention, did even space afford, to enter into an argument based upon dogmas which find with us no acceptance. Were we even unable to show that the Sabbath was not enjoined by scripture, but that the New Testament gave overwhelming evidence in its favour, it could

not alter our position. As embodying in many respects the moral obligations and religious perceptions of both, the Bible must equally command the admiration and respect of Christian and free-thinker. Yet it did not create these perceptions, still less can it dictate to or supersede them. There can be no greater mistake than to imagine, as most formalists affect to do, that because I reject its supernatural claims, I am therefore released from any moral obligations. No power whatever can break the ties which impel me to strive to realise my highest perceptions of truth and love. The Bible, with all other good books and men, are useful and beneficial only in so far as they stimulate and provoke the exertion of our moral and intellectual faculties. We have never yet found those who asserted that the Bible has a *supernatural* power in awakening that inquiry and reflection which results in some deliberate conviction. Neither if we had found any bold enough to do so would we believe them, for the state of churches and church-goers, together with our own consciousness, gives the lie to such an assertion. If it has no such power, then its claims to supernatural inspiration are a mere 'mockery, delusion, and a snare.' Clergymen and priests insist much upon its power to do so if read in a 'proper spirit.' But who does not see that this is simply begging the question? There are many books of which the same may be said, but we have not yet seen such works extolled or held up by the clergy as supernaturally inspired. Neither a perusal of the scriptures, nor yet a belief in their supernatural claims, will infallibly confer the 'proper spirit.' So far from this, the setting forth of such a power has a tendency to destroy the principle upon which conviction should be based. If, unhappily, the reader has but a very obtuse perception of moral truth or beauty, how does this to him awful claim

of supernatural inspiration affect him? He feels more or less compelled to simulate this 'proper spirit,' and does so to the best of his ability. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the consequences of this mental hypocrisy, which, dating from the time of Christ himself, and slumbering through the dark ages, now shows itself so strong in all churches. The sin of this hypocrisy is in a similar ratio to the mental development of individuals and nations. And regarding it in this light, we see no reason to regret the decay of churches and priestly influence. The more we realise within ourselves the *spirit* of Christ's teachings, the more we shall deprecate the idea of referring to it as a manifestation of miraculous power, or to the writings of his apostles as supernaturally inspired. Such a dogma, if beneficial under any circumstances, is fitted only for those—and they are yet too numerous—who fear that their moral convictions would be weak and unstable without it, and who, impelled by this fear, must seek some factitious extraneous support. But it cannot be a healthy aid whose tendency is to benumb all power of independent thought. If it is a good thing to help a man, it is an infinitely better thing to enable him to help himself. It is this state of normal enlightenment which we would abrogate. We would see independent and earnest conviction from within take the place of this public mock-worship. A prolongation of this state of pupilage, however necessary and natural in its day, is not now a thing to be desired. An infant never out of its nurse's arms is in danger of losing the use of its limbs. 'In morals it is something to gain external right conduct, even if there be as yet no internal love of goodness or insight into its nature. It is a highly valuable result if a man avoid falsehood and impurity, though he may know no better reason than his father's or his priest's command. But there is not only no spiritual *object* in his worshipping God solely because a father or a priest commands it, but the very statement is intrinsically absurd. That is not worship at all which is rendered in obedience to mere dictation, for worship is a state of the affections, and these are not under the control of the will.\*

\* Newman's 'Soul.' London: Chapman.

In such a class as is here spoken of we may safely rank all church-goers, with very few exceptions. These compose the limited number who are not mere followers of routine, who think they have a better motive in going than merely in obedience to a priest's command, and who might really feel some remorse were they to absent themselves. Yet even among these doubts will intrude. For ourselves we can say that long before we had the slightest misgivings about the sacredness of this duty, we have felt how insupportably formal and full of pharisaical seeming was the whole ceremony. It was only by an almost entire self-abstraction we could satisfy ourselves that we had in the slightest degree performed any religious duty. In the early ages matters were entirely different. There was then a bond of brotherhood between Christians, not in name only but in feeling. This reality among those who keep up the form has long since passed away, but the form itself is all the more eagerly clung to. Why should intelligent and sincere men countenance by their attendance this piece of empty mummery and saintly hypocrisy? An earnest and ingenious mind can but ill deceive itself. Despite the creed in which he has been nurtured, strange thoughts will suggest themselves in church. What fellowship have I with the worshippers here assembled, or they with me? Beyond that love which prompts me to wish well to all men, what real sympathy exists between us that should call me hither? We feel out of place in such an assembly, and if we earnestly examine ourselves we find that the admission of the fact involves no sin—no emotion of which we are, or ought to be, ashamed. We *feel* no sympathy—why then should we do ourselves the wrong of affecting any by our ceremonial attendance? Can we not trust ourselves? Are we less lovers of truth and justice because we have been brought to discern all that is pharisaical and absurd in this superstitious mummery? We feel assured that such reflections are far from uncommon; and, despite our previous training, the suggestion will at last force itself upon us, could God have commanded a ceremony which we find so utterly repugnant to our own nature? Minds confident in their own

purity and integrity will carry out such reflections into a rigid inquiry, and finally withdraw in disgust from an observance so replete with hypocrisy and pretension. But superstitious fears overawe the timid—they have not the courage to inquire. It is a deeper source of regret, however, if we come to believe, as many now do, that the great majority have not the honesty to do so. No law, human or divine, requires us to hold any terms with cant and affectation. The days have gone by in which the prosecution of freethinkers for their opinions could be safely indulged. The clergy and laity generally have learnt caution from repeated failure, and now shun any encounter. From attacking others they have come to be attacked. Emerson somewhere observes, that when the doctrine of love pules and whines, the doctrine of hatred should be preached. It is time that those who think so should preach it—the community are sure to be the gainers. A tender regard for the convictions of others is very estimable—we do not undervalue it. To have any worth, however, it must be sincere—overstrained, this feeling easily degenerates into formality and indifferentism. Why should we stickle much in our choice of words? Any one who examines the numerous writings, lay and clerical, against freethinkers, must acknowledge that they have never done so. Neither for this do we blame them. They abused and villified opinions which it is to be hoped they really imagined were deserving of it. We have then no right to complain, more especially as they became, in spite of themselves, fellow-workers in the same cause. Their defence of what is indefensible has provoked inquiry, and we wish no more. Both may be earnest, but those convictions only claim our esteem which appear as resulting from the highest intelligence.

To those who have examined the state of the church, it is sufficiently evident that this observance has long been on the decline. Votaries of custom, formalists, hypocrites, and parish schools, are now its principal supporters. With some, habit has sanctified the ceremony, until it has become a second nature. Any inquiry into its propriety they would look upon as impious. Sunday after Sunday they journey hither, not to

have their souls really awakened, or their sympathies kindled towards their fellow-men, but to maintain an appearance of piety and respectability which deceives no one. Yet some there are, we know, who would flatter themselves that in so doing they are commendable as setting a good example!

The Sabbath must be regarded by its upholders as a special dispensation of Providence, vouchsafed to meet the peculiar exigencies of these would-be saints. Hypocrisy in religion could hardly maintain its ground without it; and they must undoubtedly feel that, however lightly we can afford to regard it, it is all the world to them. What an edifying commentary on the phrase, 'religion in the soul,' does the conduct of such Pharisees suggest! We read of Christ scourging the money-changers, and clearing them out of the temple; but what is this to the herculean labour which would now await his second advent!

We deem the time to have come when all true men, all who feel aught of the spirit of Christianity, should expose the rottenness of this farce which is weekly enacted before the eyes of an awakening and inquiring public. Sabbath observance has not the slightest claim to our sympathy or respect. As a criterion of religious feeling or sincerity it is worse than valueless. We would sooner believe a man to be honest and sincere in his convictions who, upon principle, refused to countenance this ceremony, than we would credit a man with the same qualities because he did so. They follow it on purely business grounds. The fashion is a 'respectable' one, by which they hope to acquire among a certain class some sort of reputation for religion, and they look upon it as essentially necessary to their 'status' in society to attend some Christian place of worship. With such specious, sordid motives existing for their attendance, it were unwise to expect much honesty or sincerity of opinion in the characters of those attending. What wonder if an earnest mind feels out of place in church! A pious Christian he may be, and one who is not ashamed of the *spirit* of the gospel of Christ; but there is no denying the fact that he does feel ashamed of the pertinacious obstinacy with which the sample he there meets cling to the

letter and neglect the spirit. Founded, as this practice now is, on a cold, selfish, and worldly prudence, its estimation by spiritual and earnest minds is becoming every day more equivocal. Sabbatarians talk much of infidelity, atheism, etc., and are not sparing in their abuse of those who would see this ceremonious farce done away with. But there is no infidelity equal to their own in daring to couple the name of God with such a mockery. Religion in such hands is the direst form of infidelity now prevalent. They would exalt all forms to the detriment of the soul. They blaspheme against the spirit of man. They look upon its suggestions with distrust and suspicion. The tendency of their ritual and dogmas is to crush it—and yet it is such dry-as-dust anatomies as these who would have us think them competent to set a good example!

Sharp and powerful stimulants are required to arouse men sunk in spiritual lethargy. There can be no greater mistake than to suppose that your orthodox church-goer is easily stirred. Earnestness or enthusiasm is no part of his character. It is our duty to provoke by unsparing argument and ridicule, that antagonism which will excite attention, and give rise to inquiry. They no longer deceive intelligent men: let us render it impossible that they can deceive themselves. The best and only example a man can show, must be evidenced in his every day life and conversation. No other example is worth following, and no other would benefit me. With such an example, church-going has not the smallest concern. Its influence is directly antagonistic to it. If church-goers are guilty, priests are no less so. Their teachings lack life, as they themselves do faith. 'The test of the true faith should certainly be its power to charm and command the soul,

as the laws of nature control the activity of the hands, so commanding that we should find pleasure and honour in obeying. The faith should blend with the light of rising and setting suns, with the flying cloud, the singing, fo birds and the breath of flowers. But now the priest's sabbath has lost the splendour of nature. We are glad when it is done. We can make, we do make, even sitting in our pews, a far better, holier, sweeter for ourselves.'

The growing contempt and indifference for all church forms is only natural. Over intelligent minds the priest has lost all shadow of control. We know all that he will say—we may even believe that part of what he says is true. One slight defect exists which, with all our charity, we cannot overcome. It seems impossible to us that he himself can do so. 'The highest truth, if professed by one who believes it not in his heart, is to him a *lie*, and he sins greatly by professing it.\*' Such lifeless mummeries are slowly but surely working their own cure in the increasing disgust and aversion with which they affect us. We dislike their pretensions to divine teaching. We recognise more true divinity in the every-day world around us, and among men of no sectarian creed.

These priests are behind the age, which has discarded them. The church is attacked from within and without by Christians and unbelievers. Only by the outspoken sincerity of earnest minds can the upholders of such a system ever be made to see the error of their ways. To churchmen and church-goers, therefore, these remarks are addressed; and that the perusal may profit them is the earnest desire of their friend and well-wisher.

\* Arnold's 'Christian Life.'

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, it tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## ANSWER TO HENRY NORRINGTON.

SIR,—It is only by the sayings, teachings, and actions of Christ, we conceive, that he should be judged; and we have, in the article 'Aspects and Expedients of Christianity,' endeavoured to give the moral objections to Christianity. Goodness and virtue are quite irrespective of Jesus; therefore, we cannot destroy those qualities by any objection to him. We are they who endeavour to save goodness and virtue from the adulteration which takes place in their admixture with Christianity. We wish people would believe in goodness and virtue, would take them up and follow them, rather than take up the cross and follow Jesus.

The sayings, teachings, and actions of Christ are about devils, hell-fire, and a God dooming the vast majority of his creatures to eternal torment. Mr. Norrington has not told us what his belief in Christ is. At first Mr. Norrington seems to stick to the sayings, teachings, and actions of Christ. But in the fourth paragraph, we are told Jesus only left behind him an influence and spirit. When you come to the spirit of a thing, there is an end of all argument. Each man takes the spirit to be what he likes? If we are not to judge Christianity by the *letter*, what are we to judge it by. Mr. Norrington at first seems to accuse us of not judging it by the letter, and then he tells us we are not to judge it by the letter. We cannot make out whether he admits the gospels to be a proper report of Jesus. If they are not, we are to be guided by the spirit of Mr. Norrington, or what he or any other chooses to lay down as the spirit of Christianity. In fact we should have a host of spirits, and no realities, to combat. Jesus is as explicit as possible in 'I come not to send peace, but the sword,' and he follows it by a discourse all to the same purpose. We say, if such were to be the effects of his doctrines, he was the cause of them, and better have never come into the world for such an object. Mr. Norrington admits these were the effects of his doctrines. We should say with such a prospect before him, Jesus, if he had been a good man, should have immediately desisted from preaching his doctrines. In fact, if any such mischief were the result of any man's preaching, had he any sensibility he would die of despair. We completely ignore Mr. Norrington's historical fact, that the promulgation of good sets people together by the ears. We never heard people fought about the ten commandments or any book of morality, or moral philosophy, or laws enacted against crimes. People are enraged when any one comes and tells them doubtful things; and this, we say, was the preaching of Jesus. Their moral feelings were outraged when sons were told to forsake their fathers, and all other family relations were to be broken, merely to follow him. Deep religious scruples must have been shocked by being called upon to follow the son of a carpenter as a god. Any man's feelings might be violated, if any stranger came into his family and persuaded any members of it, wife or children, that they were to worship him, or some other man in whose behalf he was preaching, and that the said wife and children were to leave their home or affections. He would equally be alarmed and opposed to it, if such teaching was taken in the sense, as Christ's kingdom was by the disciples, that Christ was immediately to rule over the earth, and the family in question were to join in any political enterprise of the sort. Why cannot Mr. Norrington worship virtue and goodness, instead of Jesus, as the personification of them? It is perhaps unfair to ask us to judge of the Bible and Christ in the same

impartial manner, that we form opinions of other documents and characters. Everybody is offended when we attempt it. We do not know what Grecian or Roman history Mr. Norrington has read, to think that Jesus should be classed equal to their heroes. He should read Newman's 'Phases of Faith,' and learn to judge the character of Jesus with more freedom and more truth.

M. A., OXONIENSIS.

### CONFESSIONS OF A QUAKER.

SIR,—I read an article in your paper of the 9th of July on 'Advice to those who go to Church against their will.' Your advice on that subject (in my opinion) is good, and should you deem the following statement of any further benefit, you are at liberty to make what use of it you think proper.

Having been born a member of the Society of Friends, and brought up in their faith and worship, I was, while young, under the necessity of attending their place of worship (or church); and, as early impressions are very powerful, I was led to believe that it was my duty to my God to continue in that path. When I came to manhood I was satisfied, in my own mind, that it was my duty, therefore I continued in it: a sense of duty compelled me to continue, and many were the sacrifices I made to be regular in my attendance at their places of worship, and few were more regular. But I now often look back with sorrow and regret at the time that was spent in that way which might have been spent much more usefully. Yet I continued until about forty-five years of age; it was then too late to make up for time lost. About this time a friend informed me of a lecture that was to be delivered in this town (Derby) by a Social Missionary, Henry Layland Knight (brother-in-law to Lloyd Jones). I went to hear him, and offered a little opposition; after that L. Jones lectured here, and, not being disposed to condemn any one unheard, I went to his lecture, which made some impression on me. After him came R. Buchanan, who delivered a course which I attended, and was further convinced. The principles advocated at these lectures were then spoken of as diabolical. Hearing such dreadful accounts concerning them, I was induced to examine for myself. I got the *New Moral World* and read it, got acquainted with a few Socialists, and the more I examined these matters the more I was convinced of their truth. After R. Buchanan's lecture, J. Brindley (our old friend, where is he now?) made his appearance on the platform—this brought on the four nights' discussion between him and L. Jones. Committees were appointed on both sides. One of the Socialist Committee could not attend, and I was asked to take his place, to which I consented. This was previous to my being publicly known as a Socialist. I will leave the reader to judge of the surprise shown by the orthodox, and particularly the Society of Friends, many of whom were present, when I first made my appearance in public as one of L. Jones's Committee. But there I was for four nights—this was certainly coming out rather boldly; however, I can now say that I never repented. This led to my being disowned by the Society of Friends. At that time I was carrying on a small business, and it is possible that some few might have been prevented trading, but I cannot point out any one case. I will not pretend to say that it would be wise for every one to act in the way I did, but as a general rule I think it advisable. But any one acting so must be doubly careful in his conduct and conversation. For what would be overlooked in one of the orthodox, would be considered as the fruit of Socialism.



It is said in the Bible in effect 'seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things necessary shall be added unto you.' But this is not true. After trying it for so many years these things were not added; but, on the contrary, when I left off attending places of worship, and gave up praying (which I had sincerely practised), these necessary things began to be added, and have continued to increase.

It is clear that the Christian God did not punish me; and it is as clear to me now, that he had nothing to do in the matter, even if there is such a being. Had it been my lot to have made greater sacrifices, I should now feel well paid in the peace of mind, comfort, and happiness that I am now in possession of, which I was a stranger to in years past and gone; and if they could return, and it was at my option, I would not, no, not for the world, pass those times over again.

Derby.

B. HAGEN.

[Readers who know how often we have been indebted to the generous enthusiasm of our correspondent for aiding the circulation of our works in Derby, will read with pleasure this manly letter. Hervey (if I remember rightly) said he had no hope of people above forty years of age ever coming to believe in the circulation of the blood, and that no instance occurred in his lifetime of any medical man above that age coming to his conclusions. Had Mr. Hagen lived in Hervey's days, he would have been encouraged by one disciple above that conservative age.—Ed.]

#### THE NEGRO EXAMINED BY MR. YARDLEY.

SIR,—The following scene, which reflects disgrace upon the administration of justice, recently took place at the Thames Police Court. Two women of abandoned character were placed at the bar, charged with robbing a negro seaman, belonging to an American ship, of a coat. After the prosecutor was sworn in the usual form, Mr. Yardley, the Magistrate, suddenly asked him, 'Of what religion are you—are you a Christian?' 'No, I am not a Christian; I follow the sea.' 'Do you profess no religion, then?' asked the Magistrate. God's image carved in ebony only stared in bewilderment at the question. 'Do you never go to church?' 'Yes; sometimes I go to church, in New York.' 'What do you go for?' 'I go to see the people.' 'Is that all you go for? Do you hear what is said?' 'Yes.' 'Well, what do you hear?' 'I hear the man talk to the people.' 'And what you hear makes no impression on you?' Another stare of bewilderment was the only reply. The Magistrate looked puzzled for a moment, and again addressed the wondering negro: 'Then you have no religious belief whatever?' The negro looked as if wondering what disorder the Magistrate was alluding to; and shook his head. 'Then I cannot take your oath. The women are discharged. Stay, who does the coat belong to?' 'To the prosecutor, your worship,' said the officer. 'Then give it to him.' The women stepped laughing from the bar; of course impressed with the value of religious belief.

As nearly as my memory serves, the above was the conversation; but I vouch for its being the substance of what passed. As the parties left the Court the Magistrate smiled as if at his own wondrous sagacity. Had the man been interrogated on his notions of truth in relation to judicial investigation, the ends of justice would have been better served than by this ridiculous exhibition.

M. A. L.

### KOSSUTH, AND THE MAGYARS OF OLD.

MANY works have been recently published upon the Hungarian war of self-defence, but none of them have thrown any light upon the sanguinary events of our ancient history, from 1527, under the government of the house of Habsburg, which serve to explain the present.

The illustrious patriots, Bethlen, Botskay, Tökoly, Francis, and George Rákóczy have waged many a war, and fought battles, in order to secure political and religious freedom.

No author has undertaken to set forth the relations of Hungary to the amalgamated provinces of Austria. Hence the impossibility of obtaining a clear insight into the sanctity of our outraged rights. The public know only the glory of our hard-fought battles, and sad downfall of our country's cause. The Magyar fought like the lioness: he fought for self-defence, and not for revolution; yet he was accused by the followers of the house of Habsburg of high treason, and he met with the mercy which wild beasts show their prey. The Magyar fought and bled, not for new and immature ideas, nor for exclusive privileges, but in a holy struggle against the house of Habsburg seeking to trample under foot the rights of the nation, and to annihilate the constitution of a thousand years, derived from the ancient dynasty of Arpád. The Magyar protested against the imposition of an absolute government. He defied tyranny, and sacrificed for tyranny and the common weal 80,000 of the noblest children of the soil.

The soul of my assassinated country summons me, the innocent blood of many thousand of my brethren cries to me from the grass upon their graves, and calls upon me to enlighten the world, and all true friends of a free people, on the cause of their death. In the appendix will be found a narrative of the adventures of Kossuth after his retreat into Turkey. This duty I have endeavoured to fulfil in my work.

The fate of my unhappy fatherland ought to be a warning and a lesson to all free people unremittingly to defend their rights, and to struggle for every handful of their native soil against tyranny and despotism, which merit to be hated by every upright man.

S. SZEREDY.

[All able to promote this undertaking by obtaining subscribers, are solicited to send the list of subscriptions, early in August, to Mr. Thornton Hunt, at the office of the *Leader*, 10, Wellington-street, Strand, London, or to the editor of the *Reasoner*. The price of the work to subscribers will be 3s. A list lies at our publisher's.—ED.]

### THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE NOW ASSEMBLED IN NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

(COPY OF A PLACARD FROM THAT TOWN.)

NEWCASTLE abounds with persons who have not only been educated, but are well paid for teaching and defending Christianity. At present, through the meeting of the Wesleyan Conference in our town, this class of persons are more numerous than usual. We have assembled amongst us the flower of the Methodist Church. It is customary for these ministers of the gospel, both in this and other towns, to make their pulpits ring with denunciations of unbelievers and of their principles, while, at the same time, they are well aware that the rules of their churches deprive their opponents, under the penalties of the law, from either offering reply or

explanation. Such being the case, I beg to inform these gentlemen that a favourable opportunity now presents itself for them to hear their religion called in question, and their arguments refuted. On Monday evening George Jacob Holyoake, editor of the *Reasoner*, defended atheism before a large audience. To-night he will show that 'Catholicism,' which Protestants so much oppose, 'is the actual type of the churches around us.' Hundreds of the working classes attend these lectures, and listen with pleasure to the statements put forth. The consequences are, that some are confounded, and many convinced. I seriously ask these Wesleyan ministers whether it would not be much better, under such circumstances, for them to come forth and show the hollowness of their opponents' principles, and the soundness of their own? If they believe they have the truth, what occasion have they to shun investigation? Is not controversy one of the great means by which we elicit truth? Have we not the right to suspect the sincerity of those who, having the ability and opportunity of discussing their principles, yet strive all they can to avoid it? Let them, then, come forward at once. Mr. Holyoake will not act as Mr. Charles Larkin recently acted in the Lecture Room, while opposing atheism—will not deprive his audience of the liberty of interrogation. Not only will he answer all relevant questions, but he will gladly allow discussion, especially if it be conducted in a spirit of fairness, and with a sincere desire to obtain truth.

Newcastle, Wednesday, July 30th, 1851.

A TOWNSMAN.

**GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.**

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.  
 —August 10th [7½]. Samuel Kedd, 'Relative Value of Agriculture and Manufactures.'—12th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.'  
 Hall of Science, City Road.—August 10th [7½], a lecture.  
 National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Aug. 10th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.  
 Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'  
 Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday [8], a Lecture or Discussion.  
 City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.  
 Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.  
 City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening. Subject, 'Is there a Natural Religion?'

**ADVERTISEMENTS.**

**POPULAR WORKS.**

Theodore Parker on Matters Pertaining to Religion. 1 vol. cloth boards ..... 1 9  
 Cooper's Purgatory of Suicides. 1 vol. cloth lettered ..... 3 6  
 To be had in Parts and Numbers.  
 Cooper's Wise Saws and Modern Instances. 3 vols. cloth lettered .. 5 0  
 Cooper's Baron's Yule Feast. Wrapper.. 1 6  
 Cooper's Eight Letters to the Young Men of the Working Classes ..... 0 6  
 Cooper's Journal. 1 vol. cloth ..... 3 0

Do. Captain Cobler, or the Lincolnshire Insurrection. 1 vol. .... 2 6  
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 — Common Sense ..... 0 6  
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 — Agrarian Justice ..... 0 2  
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 — English System of Finance ..... 0 3  
 — Abolition of Royalty ..... 0 2  
 Life of Paine, by W. J. Linton ..... 0 6  
 Portrait of Paine, engraved on Steel ..... 1 0  
 The English Republic, edited by W. J. Linton. Nos. 1 to 7, each at ..... 0 6  
 Byron's Vision of Judgment ..... 0 3  
 Sonthey's Wat Tyler ..... 0 2  
 Essay on the Functions of the Brain..... 0 2  
 London: James Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster-row.

**WORKING MEN AND SHOPKEEPERS!**

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 Containing 40 columns of close print, besides wrapper, for Two Pence,

BY ERNEST JONES,  
 Of the Middle Temple, Barrister at-Law.

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## Our Open Page.

In a reply to Dr. Watts, of Manchester, the *Leeds Mercury* (we believe it is) has the following editorial paragraph:—'When it appears that persons holding views like those of Robert Owen, which are in the strongest possible opposition to Christianity—that Mr. Holyoake, the zealous apostle of atheism—that Mr. W. J. Fox, M.P., whose recent work avows the doctrines of pantheism, are all combined to advocate a system of education professing to exclude religion—is it not fair, nay, is it not strictly necessary, to conclude, that the schools thns commenced must really and absolutely exclude religion, and that they may even be taught by the most determined infidels? If this is not a fair and a necessary conclusion, we must suppose these gentlemen to be recommending a system which would exclude themselves!'

'A few Sabbaths since,' writes a correspondent from Rondout, on the Hudson, 'our minister was impressing upon his hearers the duty of a greater regard for the services of the day of thanksgiving, set apart by the governor, and was informing them that on that day he would preach a sermon at that place, and he wished them all to attend, to render in a proper manner acknowledgments for the many benefits of health, bountiful harvests, &c. Here a little wiry man in a blue coat, with metallic buttons, and a very elevated collar, popped up from his seat, and squeaked out: "Dominie, I wish you would give the tater rot a leetle tech in that sarmon o' your'n. It's been dreadful bad with us."—*American Leader* (a newspaper imitation of the English *Leader*).

A Sheffield correspondent (Mr. Buck) informs us that the 'Last Trial by Jury for Atheism' has been admitted, with a little opposition, into the library of the Young Men's Association. Likewise, that the placard relating to the above work has been posted on the walls of Sheffield.

Mr. Newton, of Stockport, who does not send his address, may obtain our published works by application to any of the Stockport news-vendors. The Lancaster Letters are printed in the *Reasoner*, Nos. 9, 10, and 11, Vol. XI.

A monk of the order of St. Augustin, in a sermon addressed to the wealthy, and published at Padua in 1675, says the following good thing for the monks of another order:—'Treasures do not perish when they are put into the bags of the poor. Franciscans! on the contrary, they are kept, they are preserved, they are rendered immortal.'

Mr. Fox informs us, that on Sunday, the 20th instant, the poem entitled 'Bel-dagon Church,' by Ernest Jones, recently quoted in the *Reasoner*, was read by a minister of the gospel to a large congregation assembled on Kennington Common.

An article in *Household Words*, of June the 28th, entitled 'A few Conventionalities,' opens with this rich morsel:—'A child inquired of us, the other day, why a gentleman always said his first prayer in church, in the crown of his hat? We were reduced to the ignominious necessity of replying that we didn't know—but it was the custom.' We do not think the answer can be improved.

The *Tablet* has stated that Dr. Paul Cullen, late of the editorial staff conducting a Roman 'Review,' in which the Copernican system was denounced on scientific and also on distinctly religious grounds, now repudiates the responsibility of that article, and gives his full adhesion to the planetary system in vogue.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## VISIT TO DUNDEE & THE REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN'S CHAPEL.

It was told to me that great disappointment existed in Dundee on account of my never having answered specially the charges brought against me by Mr. Robert Buchanan and Mr. Lloyd Jones, in the last number of the *Spirit of the Age*. Since then time has disproved many of the allegations for me, and quite to the satisfaction of the critics of this district. The other allegations were mostly founded in error, and were such that, could they have been established, they would have been at the time the *Spirit of the Age* ceased, when it was of much more importance for the party who preferred them so late, to have preferred them then. Out of respect to those to whom, on some grounds, my explanations were due, I must say that they lose sight of the true ground of personal controversy who expect it to be pursued for individual gratification. The only ground on which personal discussions can be justified, is that of vindicating or establishing some public principle, and when that public principle is established or vindicated, to occupy public attention any farther on the matter is a misuse of the privilege of controversy, and open to the imputation of proceeding from vanity, egotism, querelousness, or disappointment. The letters of Messrs. Jones and Buchanan were occasioned by a *Reasoner* Tract, written against the opposition offered by the *Weekly Tribune* to the *Leader* newspaper. But when that opposition had ceased, and the *Weekly Tribune* was withdrawn, it would have been simply bad taste to have added another word. Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Jones had a perfect right to offer any justification they pleased of themselves, and even to retaliate upon me if they saw fit, but that was no reason for my pursuing a controversy on private grounds when the public end was accomplished for which it was commenced.

In the same manner some few persons have mistaken our silence respecting Parson Lot's article in the *Christian Socialist*. It certainly was a great temptation to enter into controversy with him and the party whom he defended. His reputation, his ability, his candour, his eloquence, and the character of the coadjutors who accept him as their leader, would make controversy with him an honour as well as a pleasure. More than this, the points he urged seemed written on purpose for us to refute; but we were again warned that the sole end of public controversy is not private gratification or party victory, but the public good. In this case the public might regard it as a scandal that two societies, having the same social end in view, should appear as the opponents of each other. Much as we love controversy, and indeed seek opposition as our opportunity, we must ever observe a healthy rule in its indulgence, and avoid it wherever it may be misunderstood. When opportunity shall offer, free from ambiguity, we shall not be slow to embrace it.

The placard issued in Dundee began by saying, 'Lectures by G. J. Holyoake, of London, editor of the *Reasoner*;' and then that 'the Freethinkers of Dundee had

invited Mr. Holyoake to deliver a course of lectures on the subjects' (named). At the bottom of the bill, instead of saying 'Discussion was invited'—a form of expression which gives to some the notion of vaunt or challenge—they employed these words: 'At the close of the lectures time will be allowed for any reverend gentleman to controvert the lecturer's statements.' Circulars were sent to forty resident ministers—neither was this in the form of a challenge, but was expressed in the manner of information given. Thus: 'Rev. Sir,—The author of the enclosed pamphlet [the 'Logic of Death'] is about to visit Dundee, to deliver lectures in advocacy of the views maintained in these pages. The Freethinkers in town hope you will attend and reply to any of his statements which you may consider erroneous. The dates and subjects will be duly announced by advertisement.—DAVID GARDENER, Bookseller, Seagate.'

The style of a placard, when you first appear in a strange town, is important—it is the letter of recommendation by which the public judge you. A well printed bill, simply and clearly stated—well set out by the printer, is the safest as well as the most effective. In one town where the Hall applied for by my friends had been refused, a notice of the fact, mentioning the name of the proprietor in an unpleasant manner, was appended to the bottom of the bill. It was exceedingly disagreeable to me to disown what had been done by friends who had served me, and it was disagreeable to be supposed that I, a stranger, took upon myself to assail a gentleman utterly unknown to him, because he had not seen fit to let the stranger his Hall.

Those religionists who have the art of making religion disagreeable abound in Scotland, where they practice that art with much address. The farther you penetrate into the interior, the more oppressive the atmosphere of piety becomes. On my first Sunday in Dundee, I stepped into a coffee house—the tables were loaded with books. 'Ah!' the reader exclaims, 'then there was some light, entertaining literature to relieve the Sabbath intervals between porridge and preaching.' Not so fast, good reader. I found every volume to be an *Evangelical Magazine*, warranted not to contain a joke in fifty years. Hearing there was an accessible news-room, I rushed in search of it, and found luckily that the door had been left unlocked while the attendant had gone to the kirk. But I fared no better there. Of Scotch newspapers, there were plenty, but is there a more solemn thing on earth than a Scotch newspaper? They seem all to be edited by a minister, or by somebody who is afraid of the minister. My eye falling on two Scotch reviews, here, thought I, there will be at least something critical, though it may be heavy; but, alas! they too were religious reviews, in which every critic seemed to be also a minister, and to review nothing but religious books, which he infallibly considered the best of possible performances. All ministers in Scotland must be clever, for whatever they do or don't do seems alike excellent beyond any English measure. As nothing could be made of the news room I tried the windows; but not a vessel moved on the Tay, or a vehicle through the street. Yes, there was one—a hearse; from which I learned that a Scotchman dead enjoyed the privilege of a one-horse chaise on a Sunday—denied to the living, who would no doubt much better enjoy it.

It was a privilege to me to go to Dundee, as it afforded me the opportunity of hearing the Rev. George Gilfillan preach—an opportunity I did not fail to embrace. At any time I would go a journey to hear a minister preach who has admitted Emerson to his pulpit, which Gilfillan did, for Emerson lectured in his chapel when in Dundee. But, in this instance, curiosity to hear Gilfillan himself,

for his own sake, was to me a great attraction. He appeared taller in the pulpit than on the platform in Exeter Hall. His personal appearance is much in his favour when in his gown. He looked to me like what I supposed Samuel to have looked, when a young man. I have heard nothing like his preaching since I heard Ebenezer Elliot make speeches to the Scribes and Pharisees of the Scottish Mechanics' Institution. But Elliot had the fire of the prophet and the sublimity too; Gilfillan has certainly intervals of inspiration, but they are varied and marred by a pronunciation that would be fatal to any order of advocacy to which men show less indulgence than they do to religious advocacy. There were passages in his sermon, which, if one might take the liberty he takes in his Portrait Galleries, one should describe as a cross between a railway whistle and the sailors' whoop, when that vociferous fraternity turn the capstan in concert. Anxious as I was to hear all, there was much that I could not possibly make out, and some of the congregation owed to me to experiencing equal difficulty.

The text he took, which at this distance of time I cannot quote, was one from which he proposed to preach *three* sermons, turning upon three propositions—1. *Of God.* 2. *By God.* 3. *To God.* Certainly the Scriptures will not soon be exhausted, if this mode of preaching from them becomes universal. The chapel has a pleasant aspect in the interior. A dome in the centre, painted of the unholy colour of light blue, reflects a mild and not at all a 'dim religious' light over the gathering. The majority of the gallery occupants were young people, who looked remarkably cheerful for miserable sinners.' Some of the lasses wore cerulean veils, and their fair faces and bright eyes, full of innocence and purity, were enough to make an observer disbelieve in original sin for a month. But the place was a striking illustration how much a little science would improve Dundee divinity. The day was hot and every window was closed, and not a ventilator to be seen or felt anywhere. Many seemed distressed before the close, and short coughs from weak lungs began to be heard. I suppose the poor creatures took it for spiritualisation—me it oppressed as a disagreeable and injurious animalisation, such as the sanitary reformers are now happily banishing from tailors' workshops, and even courts and alleys. Some told me that the morning sermon related to us. The one I heard seemed to be directed at us. The reverend preacher quoted a modern infidel writer, but I could not guess *who*, nor did I ever meet with what was quoted from him. I went to hear what I had to contend against in Dundee, and I came away comforted. The discourse was *at us*, and *about us*, and *beside us*, and *around* and *over* and *under* us, but never seemed to touch us. While this sort of preaching continues we shall be safe enough. It neither reaches those with us, nor instructs nor arms those against us, and we may go on explaining our case in peace—not being even called upon for a defence, by the way. Our course is yet onward without digression. The enemy shows no front of battle. Let us take care that we improve the season of peace, which will not last for ever.

Another notice will complete the memorandums of Dundee.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

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#### ENGLISH EDITION OF GALL'S WORKS.

THE want of an English translation of Gall's 'Physiology of the Brain' has long been keenly felt by British Phrenologists. We can hardly doubt that, had this work been rendered available to the English reader at the period of its publication in France, it would long since have been generally recognised among us as the

true and only physiology of the brain ; so clear and philosophical, so beautiful, so eloquent, so forcible are all Gall's descriptions and reasonings, and so numerous are the proofs he adduces of the several organs. But even now, above half a century since their discovery, the anatomy of Gall has indeed begun to be taught in the medical schools in addition to, yet not, as I conceive it ought to be, to the entire exclusion of the antiquated and barbarous slicings and exhibition of various parts, under the fanciful and meaningless names required by the examiners at the different colleges ; such as the striated body, semicircular band, optic bed, camel's foot, black place, lyre, pen, &c., &c. ; while his physiology is only partially admitted by some, and by others totally ignored or repudiated.

Deeply impressed with these considerations, I made a careful translation of Gall's work, in six volumes, 8vo., some years ago, but have hitherto been deterred by the expense in bringing it out. Latterly, however, I have been so strongly urged to publish it by subscription, that I have determined to do so as soon as I have obtained subscribers enough, at two guineas a copy, to cover a reasonable proportion of the outlay ; compressing the whole into two handsome 8vo. volumes, in a clear bold type, with the addition of an epitome of the Anatomy, not included in Gall's 8vo. edition, and a supplement containing a notice of the organs added by Dr. Spurzheim and others ; and incorporating with the letter-press wood-cuts of all the plates referred to in the body of the work that have hitherto been published exclusively in folio, with the quarto edition, in a form so expensive as to be entirely beyond the reach of the majority of readers. I shall thus, I hope, render my translation in every way worthy of the great original ; and I trust that every phrenologist—every cerebral physiologist will co-operate with me in bringing this magnificent work fairly before the English public, important as it is to the medical man, to the lawyer, to the physiologist ; important, that is, to every one who may be called upon to treat or to legislate upon a case of disordered intellect ; indispensable to him who would study the source of the moral and intellectual faculties, the conditions of their manifestation, and the mode of discovering their organs.

EDMOND S. SYMES.

[Those of our readers disposed to take a copy or copies, will oblige by intimating the same, sending name and address at their earliest convenience, to Mr. Symes, 77, Grosvenor Street, London.—ED.]

#### MR. HOLYOAKE'S LECTURES.

DURING the past week Mr. Holyoake has lectured in South Shields and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The Wesleyan Conference, which is being assembled in that town, offered an unusual opportunity for useful discussion ; but, though an army of soldiers of the cross were present, none could be induced to do battle for Zion. A friend, well known to the rationalists of Whitehaven, has died suddenly in the town. When taken to burial, the service was refused on account of the liberality of his opinions, which has produced much excitement in the town. Added to that occasion by the late magisterial decision, Mr. Holyoake has gone down to Whitehaven to deliver lectures on the subject. Lectures for Tuesday and Wednesday evenings of this week have been announced to be delivered in the Theatre.



### Examination of the Press.

OPERATIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.—We extract the following from the speech of the Rev. Mr. Saffery, delivered at a meeting held in the Merchants' Hall, Glasgow, Bailie Gourlay in the chair:—The rev. gentleman began by remarking on the extraordinary progress of the London Tract Society. In the first year of its existence, the income of the Society was £467; last year, its income, including the proceeds of its sales, exceeded £60,000; in the first year of its history the Society issued 200,000 tracts in one language; last year it issued 20,887,064 tracts and books in 110 languages, making a total of 549,000,000 tracts and books issued since the Society commenced its operations. Yet, last year, the issues of the infidel press in London alone amounted to 30,000,000 publications, so that while this society was the only one raising anything like a bulwark against that flood-tide of evil which threatened to engulf the land, its issues were 10,000,000 behind the infidel press of London. And infidels were not only multiplying their publications, but they were adapting those publications to all the various orders of men. For the vulgar and profane they had a literature gross, sensual, and revolutionary, but for the educated and refined they had a bland and serpentine scepticism. Mr. Saffery then described in detail many of the plaus by which infidels were endeavouring to disseminate their pernicious doctrines, and quoted from an infidel publication a sublime eulogy upon the Sacred Volume, which was only introduced by the writer as the prelude to an insidious attack upon the Divine authority of the volume, which he affected to admire. Mr. Saffery also alluded to the large number of shops open on Sabbath days as well as other days for the exclusive sale of infidel publications, and to the extensive circulation of those works. In Manchester alone a monthly atheistical publication attained a regular sale of 20,000 copies. And it was alarming to find that infidels were pushing to a great extent the gratuitous distribution of tracts. Some time since, when he (Mr. Saffery) was going from London to Norwich, there was in the same carriage a gentleman with a bundle of tracts in his hand, and by his side a large bag, from which he replenished his supplies as they became exhausted. At every station he threw out some of these tracts, and in the course of the journey he presented one to him (Mr. S.) He imagined it to be a religious tract, but on looking at it was much struck at finding that it broadly and boldly advocated atheism, as the only antidote to the fear of death. In answer to an inquiry which he made, he was informed that all the tracts which had been distributed at the stations and elsewhere were of the same character. He asked the gentleman what object he could have in circulating tracts of such a tendency, and in course of conversation he received this reply:—'We shall never be able to overthrow the institutions of this country, so long as they are guarded by your Christianity.' When at Irvine, last week, he was told by a clergyman there that even in that small town the gratuitous circulation of infidel tracts had come under his observation. Entering the house of a member of his congregation he found two tracts, not only of an infidel tendency, but grossly immoral; and on inquiry, he found that they had been left by a pedlar, who was in the habit of leaving a tract with every one who purchased from him. In British India there was at the present time a spirit of inquiry abroad, and a heaving of the public mind, preparatory to the casting off of ancient superstitions. Infidels were observing the crisis, and were diligently improving it, by distributing their publications in thousands and tens of thousands. The very day after the Exhibition was opened, he was accosted by a gentleman in French, who handed him a tract in French, which

he took home in the impression that the gentleman was one of the Christian foreigners to whom the Society had given tracts for distribution. The title of the tract was, 'There is no God but Nature,' and the substance of it was this—the impulses of nature are God's voice in man, and obedience to his passions is his first and highest duty.—*Glasgow Chronicle*, July 23.

THE 'ATHENÆUM'S' ESTIMATE OF ROBERT OWEN.—We are reminded by the printed petitions of the House of Parliament of the continued existence and activity of Mr. Robert Owen. It is now nearly fifty years since this enthusiastic reformer undertook the management of Lanark Mills. The effects produced there in less than ten years on a somewhat rude and apparently intractable race by the wise and kindly policy pursued towards them, made, as soon as they were generally known, a great sensation among the advocates of popular education. Few men have ever received more flattering caresses from princes and statesmen than were for some years lavished on the successful manager of the Scotch cotton-mills: we may also add, that perhaps equally few of those who have really conferred benefits on mankind have suffered greater neglects in their old age than have fallen to his share. Yet, nothing seems to shake the benevolent reformer's confidence in his peculiar theories. What he told the world thirty years ago, he now repeats to the Parliament of England. He has, he says, discovered the one social panacea—the certain cure for 'ignorance, poverty, disunion, vice, crime, and their attendant miseries:' and this discovery he offers to lay before a committee of 'scientific and experienced men of business in the various great departments of life.' Scientific and practical men may smile at his proposal:—knowing that Mr. Owen's peculiar plans and ideas have been long before the world—that the latter have undergone twenty years of popular discussion, and that the former have been practically tried in a score of places in England, Ireland, and America, with the universal result of failure. But when these points are remembered to his discredit, it should not be forgotten that we owe to his fervour and philanthropy our present system of infant training—and that to him in a great measure is to be ascribed the more humane and reasonable methods of teaching which distinguish our present schools from those of the last generation. There is still a debt of justice due to Mr. Owen. We have no wish to see Parliament grant a commission of inquiry into his social and philosophical theories—that they are inapplicable is in part at least shown by their uniform non-success: yet we cannot but admire the consistent enthusiasm which has outlived the countenance of the great, the sympathy of the many, and the sterling devotion of the few. Mr. Owen gave a new value to 'kindness' as an element of training; and when ever he quits the scene he will leave the world gentler, and in some things wiser, than he found it.—*Athenæum*, July 19, 1851.

CIRCULATION OF VOLTAIRE'S WORKS.—'If,' says the *Assemblée*, 'a new man had been found sufficiently intelligent to understand how that *coup d'état* was to the advantage of liberty, and sufficiently bold to attempt it, there would have been a chance, though not a certainty, of success, for the minds of men, it must not be forgotten, were deeply prejudiced. The evil was in the prevailing ideas. The movement of the opposition was anti-religious, at least as much as anti-monarchical. From 1817 to 1824, 31,600 copies of the works of Voltaire had been published, 24,500 of J. J. Rousseau, and 10,000 of Piganlt-Lebrun. They were glorious times for M. Touquet; and Paul Louis Courier, as well as M. Beranger, had attacked religion as well as the Monarchy.'

## Mr. Herbert Spencer's Theory of Human Happiness.\*

BY F. B. BARTON.

'HAPPINESS,' says Mr. Spencer, 'consists in the due satisfaction of the desires;' and that there can be no satisfaction unless man is in harmony with his position. In proportion, then, as man's desires are few and simple is the probability of the attainment of happiness. But in proportion as his desires become various and complex, and indefinitely increasing, will the attainment of happiness be, not only difficult, but impossible.

A man of undeveloped mind—a *savage* or a *peasant* in a civilised country—has few and simple desires, and they are easily satisfied; this, however, is not so true of the peasant as the savage. But in proportion as the mind becomes cultivated and developed—as the feelings, the imagination, and the reason become refined—as the capacities enlarge and knowledge increases—the desires will increase in number and complexity, and as fast as one desire is gratified another will arise, and so on indefinitely. Hence the higher the state of *mental development*, the higher the state of *civilisation*, the greater the difficulty in satisfying the unceasing desires, and the greater the discontent and misery.

Consequently, *civilised man*, whose mind is in a state of *constant development*, can never be in harmony with his position (as a *savage* or *peasant* may be), because his wants and desires *indefinitely increase*; and the more they are gratified the more they increase. He is always, in his *imagination and desires*, in *advance* of his circumstances. 'Man never is, but always to be, blest.' In fact, from the very nature of man as a *progressive* being (as is the supposition), he must always be in a state of *progression*. He can never be satisfied, never come to a *stand still*; he must ever be seeking to advance, and consequently can never be happy, as he can never satisfy all his desires, never become completely in harmony with his position.

Hence it is, that seeing the hopelessness of attaining satisfaction and happiness in his *present* state of existence,

\* This article relates to a work by Mr. Herbert Spencer, which all the press has agreed to call 'able,' entitled 'Social Statics.' Published by Chapman.

man is found almost universally indulging the hope of a future life *after death*, in which all his desires shall be gratified and he shall be in *perfect harmony* with his position. An expectation, which, judging from our experience in man's constitution, we must consider altogether *visionary*.

Again: 'Happiness,' we are told, 'consists in the due exercise of all the faculties. Man must, therefore, to be happy, have liberty to exercise all his faculties, so that, in so doing, he does not interfere with the similar liberty of others. All must have rights to liberty of action, hence arises necessarily a limitation.' Yes; and this limitation must necessarily more or less interfere with *perfect liberty* of action (which is thus proved *not to exist*), and consequently with the *full gratification* of the desires. A cannot have *full liberty* to gratify all his desires, because if he has, he interferes with the liberty and desires of C and D; consequently, A's happiness is interfered with and diminished by C and D. The same is true of C's happiness as regards A and D, and so on as regards all the members of a community.

Man, whether in a savage or civilised state, appears to be constituted to be more or less *selfish*—i.e., to consider his own interests and happiness more than those of others. He will, therefore, more or less interfere with the desires and happiness of others in order to realise his own, or he will have his own desires and happiness interfered with by others. If man's selfishness be denied, or it be supposed to be in course of *diminution*—which we apprehend it would be difficult to prove, for civilisation, by promoting the love of ease, promotes selfishness—still we cannot imagine a *highly-developed* mind, with many and complex desires, having no desires but those which he can gratify without interfering with the desires of others. He must, therefore, feel desires which he cannot gratify and yet cannot eradicate; he must, therefore, practise *self-denial* and make sacrifices, which involve more or less of loss and pain, and so far his happiness is diminished. Again: Mr. Spencer considers that man is perpetually tending

to complete harmony with his position, which he will ultimately reach, and thus that 'evil will disappear.' I confess I see no proof of this; the proof lies all the other way. There is one 'great fact,' already referred to, which upsets this position—that a state of high mental development, the characteristic of civilisation, is always found accompanied by a perpetually-increasing amount of wants and desires: so that desire and imagination are ever in advance of the position attained, and consequently content, to say nothing of happiness, can never be realised. The 'complete harmony' supposed, therefore, can never exist.

The instances adduced of man's 'adaptability' to circumstances are, to say the least, very unsatisfactory, and show rather a *deterioration* than any approach to 'perfectibility.' It is said that 'man becomes fleet and agile in the wilderness, and inert in the city—attains acute vision, hearing, and scent when his habits of life call for them, and gets these senses blunted when they are less needful;' i.e., man, in a state of civilisation, loses his natural powers, and so becomes deficient and mutilated—a sufficient proof to me that he has transgressed a law of nature, and is suffering the punishment of his disobedience. The 'agility of the wilderness' induces vigorous health; the 'inertness of the city' leads to feebleness of constitution and premature decrepitude. It is true, necessity sharpens man's ingenuity, and occasions the invention of contrivances to supply the loss or defect of natural powers. Thus the optician furnishes us with glasses, the dentist with teeth, the wig-maker with hair, and the deterioration of our locomotive powers is supplied by vehicles and railways. But surely no one will contend—like the fox in the fable, who, having lost his tail, wished to prove it was better to be without one—that these contrivances are adequate compensation for the loss of the natural powers; loss and inconvenience have been sustained, which, as they lessen enjoyment, must diminish happiness. The loss or deficiency of natural powers being granted, it is admitted that man is in process of deterioration. The instances of the drunkard, the opium-eater, the smoker, and snuff-taker are still more unfortunate, and show the weakness of the foundation on which the author's

theory rests. These instances are adduced to show 'how the system gradually acquires power to resist what is noxious.' Nothing, according to the authority of physiologists and the testimony of experience, can be more erroneous. It is true, that the *irritating* effects of unnatural stimulants at length cease to be felt at those avenues, whose warning voice has been neglected; but the noxious agent is gradually affecting the constitution, till disease supervenes, and death vindicates the violated law of nature. This is notoriously the case with the confirmed drunkard and opium-eater. Smoking and snuffing, though not so noxious, cannot but be injurious; for nature expostulates on their first introduction into the system. The same is true of all unnatural stimulants. If there are, as is generally insisted upon by physiologists, certain conditions under which *alone vigorous health* can be realised, man, although he may by habit blunt his perceptions of the noxious influences silently at work, can never be placed in circumstances at variance with these conditions without suffering more or less in his health and duration of life. I refer Mr. Spencer to some striking instances against his theory of adaptability adduced by Dr. J. Johnson, in his work on 'Change of Air,' when speaking of 'goitre and cretanism,' 'the pellagra,' and the horrible effects of the malaria of the Roman marshes on the native inhabitants. It deserves notice, also, that the Americans of the United States are generally an unhealthy people, and do not seem yet acclimatised after at least two centuries. I would especially call Mr. Spencer's attention to the prevalence of ill-health, disease, and premature death, under our present civilisation, as facts strongly at variance with his theory of adaptability. The evils are justly considered by physiologists as the natural results of the violation of the laws of nature, which laws, though they may apparently be evaded for a time, are sure ultimately to vindicate their power, despite the alleged influence of time and habit. Man is constituted for constant *physical* activity, which, by the law of nature, supposes but little *mental* exercise, for they are not found to be consistent. Civilisation runs directly counter to this law of man's being, for its characteristics are *sedentary* employment and *mental* application,

the evil effects of which are increased by luxurians diet and unnatural stimulants. Instead, therefore, of vigorous health and longevity (see Captain Cook's account of the New Zealanders), we have feeble constitutions, innumerable diseases, and premature death. The grand characteristic and error of civilisation is the development of the nervous system at the expense of the muscular system—just the reverse of what nature intended in framing the human constitution. The natural result is an excessive susceptibility of the brain and nervous system, which occasions, not only a long train of bodily disorders, but a great number of mental maladies. Hence nervousness, hypochondria, insanity, and suicide, which are prominent characteristics of civilised life, and which appear to be on the increase. Hence, also, irritability of temperament, so fruitful in domestic and social disorders; unnatural crimes, as mothers poisoning their children and wives their husbands; hence the insane craving after excitement, and the love of the horrible and the terrible; hence extraordinary schemes and extravagant theories; hence many of the religious and political movements, which savour strongly of monomania. All these evils seem evidently traceable to excessive nervous susceptibility, which all the influences of civilisation combine to create and encourage. A striking proof how contrary are the general influences of civilisation to the laws of nature, so far as health of mind and body are concerned, is found in the fact, that civilisation not only makes men morbidly sensitive to *natural* impressions, but *creates* moral and social evils which are still more intolerable to this excessive susceptibility; so that a double amount of mischief is created. It is as though a man were not only divested of clothing but denuded of his cuticle, and his more sensitive cutis constantly exposed to the irritating agency of briars and nettles. I am aware that it will here be said, that the evils of man's present position are admitted, but that that does not affect the argument in hand, as he is in a *transition* state, gradually on his way to a complete adaptation to his position, and that all the evils complained of are in course of extinction. Of this I am sorry to say I can see no evidence, but quite the reverse. Let it

be remembered, that man was originally created, as our author admits, in harmony with his position—that he lived in accordance with the laws of his nature, and lead a life of physical activity and of simple habits, and was consequently healthy and contented—that, in course of time, he forsook the habits that were in accordance with his constitution, and adopted habits of an *artificial* character that were contrary to the *primary* and *essential* laws of his nature, and consequently became generally unhealthy, discontented, and often miserable.

He has gone from nature to art, from health to disease, from contentment to misery. Does this look anything like a gradual *progress* from imperfection to perfection? Does it not rather look like a *retrogression* from good to evil? \* What probability is there that man will ever again live in accordance with those laws which, whatever modifications may have taken place in his constitution, cannot be violated with impunity, as he is constantly reminded by those physical and mental sufferings to which all of every class in civilised life are more or less subject? What probability is there that man will forsake the artificial, the luxurians, the enervating, for the simple, the physical, the strengthening? Is it not more in the order of nature that he should go on in the course he has adopted, and become more artificial, more luxurians, more enervated—in other words, that his *nervous susceptibility* will *increase*, and therefore the numerous physical and moral evils that flow from that prolific source, when all the agencies that act upon this susceptibility are continually on the increase? There appears to me to be abundant evidence that this is really the case. When was there ever more cerebral excitement, more mental application and anxiety—whenever more religious, political, and social agitation—whenever more loud and general complaints of political and social evils—whenever the pressure of excessive population more severely felt—whenever more pauperism and crime—whenever more violent and unnatural crimes—whenever a greater repugnance

\* We readily admit that civilisation has many advantages, but we consider that none of its gifts can be placed in competition with health and contentment.

to physical exertion—a greater invention and application of machinery to supersede manual labour, or more contrivances for superseding physical exercise—whenever a greater desire to obtain wealth in the shortest and easiest method, by speculation, by gambling, in order to enjoy ease and luxury? Never surely was there a time when more general and active agencies were at work for exalting the nervous sensibility and lessening the physical activity.

All medical writers agree that the nervous susceptibility of the human system is greatly on the increase, that consequently never did nervous disorders more prevail, or more dyspepsia, more hypochondria. Never were medical men more numerous, whether physicians, surgeons, dentists, oculists, aurists, &c.; never more chemists, never more quack medicines sold. Hospitals, asylums for the insane and idiotic, for the deaf, dumb, and blind, are increasing—but not half so fast as the demand for them is increasing.

All these facts testify to the increase of disease. This will, perhaps, be denied; but, independently of the significant signs just enumerated, it is admitted by those most competent to form a judgment on the subject, that if some diseases—as leprosy, the sweating sickness, &c.—have disappeared, new ones have arisen, as that Protean and comprehensive disorder termed nervousness, also dyspepsia, cholera, influenza, diseases of the heart—hence sudden deaths are greatly on the increase. Even the much-vaunted vaccination gives evidence of diminished power to ward off the small-pox, which is now often fatal to persons of middle age as well as to children.

I know it will be urged that the probability of life has increased. I have not space fully to discuss this point, but can only express my doubt of the validity of the evidence on which this fact rests. It is not fair to come to a decision on this point from comparing the tables of deaths very accurately kept in the present time with those of a period when they were not kept at all, or very imperfectly kept. It is well-known that tables of mortality kept at different places differ considerably.\* Be this as

it may, if we grant that the duration of life has increased, it may yet be true, as Dr. J. Johnson observes, that disease has increased; for 'certain kinds of maladies may affect great multitudes of people without materially abridging the span of human life.' Persons may live a long period under chronic disorders and under the constant or frequent endurance of much suffering. This is true of nervous disorders, which yet involve an infinite amount of mental distress and physical discomfort and debility. It is surely, generally speaking, better to be cut off in the prime of life by a plague or by war than to linger through many years of pain and suffering, a torment to one's self and a source of distress to all one's relations and friends.

So far, then, from there being any proof of man's progressing to a state in complete harmony with his position, and of the ultimate removal of evil, there appears to be overwhelming evidence that man, from the increasing susceptibility of his constitution and the increasing evils and difficulties of his circumstances, must become more and more at variance with his position, and that evil and misery will consequently become aggravated. The law of nature respecting evil appears to be, not that it tends to disappear, but that it merely changes its character, and will, therefore, always continue in one form or another. It is found, also, to be a law of nature that good is not absolute, but is always attended with some evil. How, then, without a reversal of a law of nature, can we expect that evil can possibly disappear?

The only way to diminish evil is to lessen man's susceptibility to it. This appears to be man's state in his primitive position of physical activity and simple habits, to which there is no probability that he will return. But, under civilisation, with increasing evil and increasing susceptibility to it, the prospect before us is evidently that of the increase, not of the disappearance, of evil.

I should feel much obliged to Mr. Spencer if he will solve the difficulties which appear to me to attach to his theory of human happiness.

life at Rome, 1300 years ago, was very much the same as it is throughout Europe at the present day.'—*Philosophy of Health*. This does not look much like improvement.

\* Dr. Southwood Smith considers 'it may be presumed, that the duration of

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, it tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## MR. CHILTON'S ANSWER TO HENRY NORRINGTON.

SIR,—In replying, in compliance with your wish, to Mr. Henry Norrington's letter (*ante*, No. 268), in which he charges you with mistaking Christianity, I must be understood as doing so upon its merits, and without reference to anything which you might have said or written on the subject.

The spirit in which Mr. N.'s letter is dictated is all that could be desired; but his opinion of what constitutes Christianity is, to me, somewhat incomprehensible. Mr. N. says he 'fears you sometimes mistake your position, and confound the thing called Christianity with the sayings, teachings, and actions of Christ.' The 'sayings, teachings, and actions of Christ,' as recorded in the New Testament, are the only grounds that exist for Christianity. Out of the New Testament—as in the fragments (thanks to Christians, fragments only) of Celsus, Porphyry, Julian, &c.—Christ cuts but a very sorry figure. 'What your [the editor's] moral objections to Christianity can be I cannot conceive,' says Mr. Norrington. 'The spirit of all Christ's teachings is pure and heavenly. If your opinions (continues Mr. N.) are formed by what is *said* of Christ, then your moral objections must exist in great abundance.' You, I presume, like every one else, have formed your opinions of the moral value of Christ's teachings by what it is *said* in the New Testament Christ taught. Where else you could obtain any, or better, information on the subject, I do not know. From whence did Mr. Norrington obtain the ground for his belief that the 'spirit of all Christ's teachings is pure and heavenly,' if not from the New Testament? and if, from the same source, 'moral objections in great abundance' may be obtained, are not you (the editor) justified in teaching that Christianity is a worthless thing as respects this world, whatever might be its value as respects another, in which, however, you have no faith?

Mr. Norrington says, 'Christ never wrote anything for posterity, nor commanded anything to be written; but he left behind him an influence and spirit that admits of eternal progress, and modifies all external institutions.' I am not aware that Christ ever wrote anything for his contemporaries. Now, as Christ 'never wrote anything for posterity,' it is manifest that all we can know of him or his teachings must be either traditional or what has been written by a second party. The Church of Rome professes to be the depository of certain traditions respecting Christ, which she says were received by her directly from the apostles; but as Mr. Norrington says Catholicism is not Christianity, I shall pass them over as of no value. There remains then only the writings of the New Testament to tell us anything of Christ or his teachings; and if the validity of these is impugned—there being no other source of information on the subject—there is at once an end of Christianity as a moral code, owing its origin to a man called Christ, and as being God-intended as a rule of life for this world and as a passport for another life to come.

Mr. Norrington says, 'If such a being [as Christ] were met with in Grecian or Roman history he would be the constant object of laudation. Then why refuse him his just meed of praise and reverence because his followers have deified him, *put into his mouth words that he never spoke, attributed to him actions that he never performed, and made him responsible for all the miserable sophistries and dogmas which they have invented?*' What exclusive source of information on this subject has Mr. Norring-

ton, that he speaks so confidently of the wholesale adulteration of the history of Christ as contained in the New Testament? Neither Mr. Norrington nor any one else has a right to coolly ignore important statements in an historical or semi-historical work, without bringing ample evidence justifying such a course, which Mr. N. has not done. When the editor calls in question the moral value of Christianity, it is with exclusive reference to the Christianity of the New Testament: it is neither this man's view nor that man's view of what Christianity ought to be, but *his own* view of what it is made to be by those who had a personal knowledge of Christ, and who say they heard and saw what they record; and upon this ground Mr. N. himself admits there exist reasons for moral objections in abundance.

Mr. Norrington says 'Catholicism is not consistent Christianity.' What is consistent Christianity? Is there any such thing—has there ever been—or is it possible there ever could be, and society hang together? Mr. N. says he is a 'rationalist'—are rationalists agreed as to what is consistent Christianity? The impression on my mind, from what rationalistic views have come before me, is that rationalists consider Christianity to be a name which men are at liberty to give to any metaphysical or theological opinions they may hold, provided a code of pure morality forms one of the ingredients in the scheme. I may be wrong, and should like to be set right if I am so. I should like to know what essential part the Christ of the gospels plays in the moral code of a rationalist, and what claim rationalists have to the title of Christians. Mr. Norrington would oblige by explaining.

In conclusion, I would remark that as, in estimating the moral value of Christianity, so in determining its most perfect type amongst existing sects, the editor has gone to the epistles and gospels to learn what *is* Christianity. And if, as a consequence of such investigation, he considers Catholicism the most perfect type of New Testament Christianity, I have no doubt—for I have never heard him on the subject—that he has many and cogent reasons for such conclusion.

July 21, 1851.

W. CHILTON.

#### IRRELIGIOUS BOOKS.

SIR,—I read with great pleasure your lecture on 'Irreligious Books,' reported in the *Carlisle Journal*. The question is one which is very much discussed at the councils of our Mechanics' Institution here. The wrong committed by a rule excluding irreligious books is not confined to infidels, but extends here to all religious thinkers who are in the minority—and as it happens that one class has the major influence at the Institution at one time, and another at another time, the whole of the religious public, betimes, and the *Secularists* at all times, suffer in consequence. The cause of much of this is, what was intended as a plain injunction has become quite an enigma—and the questions of what are religious and irreligious books, are the most difficult we have got to settle. In the midst of this a new light has broken in upon the conscientious—namely, that although privately they hold a certain book religious, yet, as the rule was sanctioned publicly, it would be unfair to introduce the book unless they found the public would let it pass the 'Index Expurgatorius,' which would necessitate a public meeting over the head of a great proportion of all new books. Unfortunately this is not convenient, and because one cannot conveniently have his book adjudged, he and society lose by the squaring of his conscience to this clumsy rule. If ever there was a drag on progress, or a weapon fitted to cut on all sides—enemies and friends—it is one of this kind, and will surely not long survive the growing good sense of all classes. S.



## RATIONALISM AND ITS ASSURANCES.

SIR,—While hearing you lecture in Paisley, the following thoughts presented themselves to my mind more forcibly than usual. Beside their importance to myself, I find they are objections with Roman Catholics to the *Reasoner*. Your manner of treating such objections would be desirable.

How can any one deduce a certain creed of morality from the system you advocate? Actions have enduring and infinite effects: human powers of judging them are limited and transitory. It is easy to advocate, to judge according to capacity—not so easy to trust the worth of our decisions. To me it is plain, if the effects of every action be infinite, the finite adjudicator has no time to calculate its worth or weigh its comparative value with an immense number of other things possible for him to do; and therefore he can never arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. So far as he can see, a number of actions may be worthless, yet they shall so modify futurity that posterity may pronounce them the most fortunate events that could have happened; while others, apparently great and pompous, lose themselves like rivers in sands.

Is he not, then, who is led by faith, happier than the Rationalist? He who believes the infinite God alone can and has revealed the secret of morals in their connection with the infinite universe—who is not led by a pilot he distrusts, but throughout the short period of his life is unteazed by doubt—enjoys his dogmatic conclusions with a confidence and zest the *inquirer* vainly looks for. T.

[Our correspondent fails to conceive our case. It is not necessary 'to deduce a certain creed of morality from the system we advocate.' There is already much morality in the world never practised; one reason of it we take to be, that men look for it in books of faith rather than in the nature of things. What we advocate is their looking to nature for moral direction, where men find a ground for it which is intelligible and associated with consequences which recommend it. We may not be able to see the infinite consequences of our actions. No matter for that. We determine to do a thing because of the consequences as far as we can see them. Whether the man of Faith is happier than the Inquirer depends upon the *kind* of happiness a Christian prefers. The Ostrich is happy when it hides its head from threatened danger, but happier is the Eagle who faces it and fights it. The Sot is happy who drowns his cares; but happier is he who keeps sober, meets, and masters them. It cannot be true that the Christian who walks by faith is happier than he who walks by Sight, for no man walks by Faith when he has Sight to walk by.—ED.]

## ON THE QUEENWOOD PETITION.

SIR,—In your last number, along with the Petition of the Central Board of the Rational Society, you published some remarks, condemnatory of its tone. To induce legislative inquiry it was essential that some wrong must be stated, for which the ordinary course of law did not provide an efficient remedy; and, as is stated in the Petition, the gentlemen with whom it originated did not think it at all likely that law proceedings would result in anything satisfactory. The allegations of the Petition have therefore been confined as closely as possible in our power to the facts of the case. In your remarks you admit the facts, but object to the mode of putting them forward. The only person directly charge with wrong is Mr. John Finch. By giving insertion to the foregoing you will oblige myself and colleagues.

J. CRAMP, V.P.

## NAMING CHILDREN.

SIR,—The fact of your having baptised or named three children in public assembly in your late visit to Glasgow, as mentioned in the *Reasoner*, is, I think, somewhat inconsistent with your rejection of all religions and religious creeds, and demands some explanation of the grounds on which you rest such a practice:

What is it but the vain imitation of the religious world, with whom the practice is in consonance with their professions? but with those who think as you do it is destitute of meaning, answering no useful purpose, and therefore worthless.

It appears to me an exhibition of weak pride on the part of the parents, and inability on the part of all to act consistently, who countenance such proceedings.

Glasgow.

TIMON.

[To do nothing that a Christian does *because* he does it, as Timon appears to argue, would oblige one not to eat because the Christian eats. This might be 'consistent,' but it would be rather troublesome. I did not baptise (none of us ever did) any children. I only gave them names publicly, and that at the request of any parents when they asked for it. It can be converted into a pledge of duty on their part. It is only when a parent requests that I comply with it. As a mere ceremony I regard it as useless.—Ed.]

## A SUCCESSFUL ESCAPE.

SIR,—My present opinions are adverse to frequenting 'houses of God,' and they caused me a strenuous combat to obtain the privilege of my choice in the matter. When I divulged the real state of my mind on religion to my father, and why I could not attend church, the subject passed off with his observing that 'some day I should find I was wrong;' but when the following Sunday came, and he insisted on my going to church, I remonstrated, by which I gained my right.

Another very awkward position for an atheist to be in, is when the family have been accustomed to say grace. It was my duty to say grace before dinner every Sunday. I have been obliged to modify my 'grace,' and remove the usual sense altogether. The few 'unthankful' words I uttered, coupled with the indifference which I manifested, induced my father to say it himself, and so I got clear.

These difficulties I have mastered, but others oppress me, which all-conquering time only can relieve. One cause of vexation to me is, that I am prohibited attending the Sunday evening lectures in London, although I may perchance reach Webber Street. At present this is my greatest anxiety. When I can obtain this liberty, I hope to follow some plans I have in contemplation for acquiring knowledge.

Most decidedly I am of opinion that each person should think for himself, and be allowed to act accordingly, providing such conduct be upright and tending to the well-being of mankind. Why should not the atheist be allowed the free-will the Christian so much stickles for?

B. B.

MORAL COMPENSATION

SIR,—Will you explain the difference, in point of morality, between the *atonement* you propose to Church-going infidels and the *penances* of the Romish Church, and oblige  
 ONE OF YOUR CONSTANT READERS.

[The penances of the Romish Church are penances, I take them, chiefly for sins of *indulgence*; the *retaliation*, not 'atonement,' of which I spoke, was for sins of *coercion*, the acts of others.—ED.]

Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 270, 529s.—J. W., 20s.—Andrew Smith, Gateshead, 2s.—William Hensley (per do.), 1s.—Michael Turnbull (per do.), 1s.—Martin Pearson (per do.), 1s.—Thomas Meek (per do.), 1s.—A Friend (per Mr. Crothers, Newcastle-on-Tyne), 5s.—William Crabtree, 1s.—Veritas, 1s.—Edwin Scoley, 1s.—Hugh Martin, 8d.—Jones, Monmouthshire, 2s. 6d.—G. E. Taylor, Sheffield, 1s.—J. H. (per Mr. Watson), 2s.—C. F. Nicholls (annual), 1s.—Found (per Mr. Watson), 1s.—Total, 571s. 2d.

GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.—August 17th [7½]. Henry Knight, 'Sunday Sermons versus Sunday Science.'—19th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.' Hall of Science, City Road.—August 17th [7½], a lecture.

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Aug. 17th, [8], P. W. Perfitz will lecture.

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [9], a Discussion.

City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening. Subject, 'Is there a Natural Religion?'

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 Our Open Page.
 

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THE *Leader*, of July 19th, contains an article entitled 'A Prudish Lord.' We have not space to quote it, but it deserves the attention of our readers and the working men who are moving against the absurd tyranny therein described, and ought to be encouraged.

We have received a long letter from Edwin Scoley, of Peterborough, who informs us that he exhibits in his shop window a list of freethinking publications for sale, including the 'Age of Reason,' 'Logic of Death,' and *Reasoner*. Mr. Scoley is a shoemaker, and says he has met with disadvantages in trade through thus giving publicity to his principles.

We have transmitted to the commissioners, superintendents of classes, and other officials connected with the Crystal Palace, copies of the tract entitled 'The Workman and the International Exhibition,' originally published in No. 65 of the *Leader*.

The extortions from the Friends, by distraint for ecclesiastical purposes, from 1700 to 1850, amount to £1,136,125; and it is computed, on good authority, that the spoliation of Friends' property in one hundred and ninety-five years for ecclesiastical purposes amounts to £1,316,000. The account from 1700 to 1850 is taken from authentic documents, annually printed by direction of the yearly meeting.

At Gregory's Hotel, Cheapside, may be seen a picture of Shelley amid the Ruins of Rome. It was first painted at a cost of £100. Mrs. Shelley, Leigh Hunt, and others, considered it to contain a good likeness of the poet. The scene is the baths of Caracalla, where Shelley composed his 'Prometheus Unbound.' Severn, the artist, resided many years near the spot. The picture is for sale.

The 'Oldham Social Society' meets the first Sunday in every month at the house of Mr. Edward Rye, Red Lion Inn, Bottom-of-moor, at 7 o'clock p.m. This Society has ordered six dozens of the tract entitled the 'Logic of Death' through various booksellers, and intend to furnish all Clergymen and Dissenting Ministers with one each. Mr. Beswick sent one to the clergyman who has the charge of his soul. The rev. gentleman edified his followers with three lectures upon it.

In a speech at a Bible meeting at Cheltenham (so the *Derby Mercury* reports) the Rev. Francis Close said, 'There were some very smart ladies went to his church—ladies with beautiful pink bonnets and very fine ribands, and dressed in all sorts of finery; and some of these ladies were in the habit of coming out of his church, and dropping into the plate little neatly-folded packets done up in brown paper. Now he might mention it as a statistical fact, that there was never found in any one of these little packets any of the current coin of the realm more valuable than copper.'

It is said that a small piece of rosin dipped in the water which is placed in a vessel on a stove will add a peculiar property to the atmosphere of the room, which will give great relief to persons troubled with a cough. The heat of the stove is sufficient to throw off the aroma of the rosin, and gives the same relief that is afforded by the combustion of the rosin. It is preferable to combustion, because the evaporation is more durable. The same rosin may be used for weeks.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## THE LECTURES IN DUNDEE.—A 'SLOW' YOUNG MAN READS AN ESSAY.

THE lectures in Dundee were delivered in the Thistle Hall. The audiences increased as the course proceeded. Finding that the editor of the *Dundee Courier* had attacked the Chartist programmists, I walked down to the office of that gentleman, and desired to know 'whether he would insert a reply from me, who, as a member of the Assembly who passed the Programme, was a party concerned?' He said 'he could not tell till he had seen my reply.' I answered, 'I knew that very well—no editor could answer otherwise under the circumstances. I only wished to ascertain whether he had any moral objection to inserting it, before I prepared it. It was my business to make it such as he could insert; and if I failed in that, I was quite willing that he should alter or reject it.' Everybody told me it was of no use going to him and of no use writing to him, for he would not put it in—he never took any notice of any communications from the people. 'No matter,' I answered, 'it was my duty to send a reply, and his to decline it if he saw fit.' The same night I read my reply to an audience of seven hundred people. I am bound to say that the editor treated it with courtesy; every comma of it duly appeared in the next *Courier*. It has since been quoted in the *Leader*, the *Star*, and other newspapers.

The hearers at the lectures were occasionally tumultuous; but there was this advantage, you did know when they understood you. Some audiences will give no sign of this; you might as well address a luggage train as address them. You can no more tell whether they comprehend you any more than a carriage of coals or a bale of cotton. The hiss of the honest fellow is as great a relief as that of the dumb speaking; it is an indication, a land-mark by the way. If either applause or complaint is indiscriminate, if it becomes in any sense immoderate, silence is much better. Such manifestations have neither sense, taste, nor direction in them. But when manifestation of feeling is judicious it is a beacon or encouragement.

The disputants at the two last lectures in Dundee were numerous enough to create some comedy. One rather 'slow' young man read a speech, which of course, being prepared before I had spoken, was not very remarkable for relating to the subject. As I saw he had a gift for reading the same thing every night,\* I offered to print it for him in the *Reasoner*, and received it for that purpose. I have to apologise that the press of matter arising out of the Lancaster Controversy has delayed its appearance till now. The reader will find it, I am afraid, rather dull. I tried to condense it, but found that impracticable, and I present it as forwarded to me by the writer. It is as follows:—

'I confess to you, my friends, that I am no bigot in religion; so far am I from

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\* He actually sent me a note to ask me to read it a second night to the audience.

being so, I can assure you that if Mr. Holyoake will, by dint of reasoning, give me demonstrative evidence that there is no God—if he give me clear proof that there is not such a being—I shall this night, or any other night, be converted to atheism. My parents were both members of the orthodox Protestant church, and instilled into my mind, when a child and boy, that Christianity was true. I was compelled to attend the same church as themselves. About the period when I was twelve years of age, I had neither proof that the Scriptures were true nor false. I went then regularly to church, but I confess that my mind had no clear evidence that the Scriptures were true or false. Notwithstanding all the teaching of my parents and of ministers, reason, like the sun, began to break through. After having attended divine service three times on a Sunday, after leaving church on each occasion I found that so incredulous was I that I was not satisfied with the bare assertions either of the minister or my parents. I felt within me a desire to inquire for myself; and though neither at that time did I profess infidelity, or atheism, or Christianity, I began to train and cultivate and strengthen my reason and judgment—and I confess I did feel within me a willingness to believe what had evidence in its favour, and to disbelieve what was clearly proved to be false. Such being the principles on which I acted in the formation of my creed in regard to every subject that came under my observation, you will not presume to deny that these principles were reasonable and right. You then may be anxious to know what is my creed. [I certainly had not the slightest anxiety.] What are my opinions after a period of eight or nine years has been increasing my knowledge and experience, and brought many subjects to the bar of an unbiassed judgment? Well, if it is not presuming on your patience, I would say, in as few words as possible, that I have considered all the atheistical arguments in favour of that system, and I have to confess that they have never satisfied me that there is not a God; and I further confess that, at this time, I cannot convince myself that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are false—but, at the same time, I will confess that sensible evidence of their being all truth was wanting to me also (I mean by sensible evidence, that evidence which convinces me that you, Mr. Holyoake, are seated on that platform). Now, since the arguments of the atheist in favour of his system do not convince my judgment that atheism is true, nor the arguments of divines that the Scriptures have sensible and demonstrative evidence of their truth, what, “to be consistent with my principles,” should be my creed? Am I to say that the Scriptures are false, when I have no sensible and demonstrative evidence that they are false? No, surely. On the other hand, am I to say they are true without having the same evidence that they are so? No, surely. Such is the conclusion you will expect me to have come to, “to be consistent with my principles.” Well, am I to remain fixed in the unbelief of both systems, without resolving to inquire further regarding both? No. As the different systems are contradictory to each other, both cannot be true; and if Christianity be true atheism must be false, and if atheism be true Christianity must be false. But, as the evidence of sense apparently cannot be given to confirm either as truth, it is for me to say I think such and such is true, and I think such and such is false, as circumstantial evidence in the proof of either system is to be found. My friends, are we going up to London to see the Great Exhibition that is now open in that city, claiming a title to ordinary intelligence and some experience? On seeing for the first time some complicate piece of machinery, I would be of very little doubt as to some facts regarding it. Indeed there are some such, that if I did not believe I would risk my name for mental sanity. I refer to the belief that such a complicate piece of machinery

was formed of human hands, contrived and designed by a human mind. Now, suppose the inventor and maker of it to be in a distant country (he can't be in America and England at the same time—in other words, that I can't see him with my senses), can I, notwithstanding his present invisibility to my senses, be of the least doubt of its having a human being for its maker and designer? Surely not; now then I call such satisfactory and reasonable evidence to me, though not possessed of the evidence of the senses. Permit me to give another simple illustration. Suppose I possessed some heritable property in Edinburgh, and such uninhabited; suppose a dozen of robbers had resolved to break into this property; suppose that there were jewels of great value in the interior of this property, at a certain time they (the robbers) had gathered together for the purpose of devising how they might most easily accomplish their object. Some friend of mine had noticed them about the premises, and from their suspicious appearance he suspected their intention, and consequently began to set watch on the property himself. At last, as expected, the robbers are observed by him at the quiet hour of midnight, he unobserved by them. My friend instantly despatches a messenger to my residence, say in Dundee. I am in bed, a knock comes to my door, the door is opened, the messenger hastily communicates the intelligence to me. Now to act with wisdom. What should be my conduct in a case of this kind? Because I do not have the evidence of my senses that this man's statements are true, am I to lie contentedly down again in my bed, asking the messenger to satisfy me first by the evidence of sense that he is speaking the truth? Such would be the height of folly. Surely as the case affects myself, I should not rest till I had gone over to Edinburgh, in case (as it was not an impossibility) it might be true, that thereby I may protect my jewels and property. Now such is just the plan I would take with the Scriptural message and information it gave me. Suppose everlasting happiness to be the property and the valuable jewels; suppose heaven (by which I mean some portion of space in the universe where this happiness is to be enjoyed) to be the place where the property is; this earth suppose to be my residence, the Bible the messenger. Well, this messenger, addressing me as a man, says "You are a being in whom is a soul that will exist for ever and ever. A being called God made you; he is all-powerful, therefore it is quite reasonable to believe everything to be possible with him. If you do what I ask you, you will be happy for ever and ever; if you do not, you will be miserable throughout eternity to come." Now if I can't prove, and if no one person or persons can prove to me, that the Scriptures are telling me lies, and as it concerns myself it behoves me, from the desire of everlasting happiness and from the terror of everlasting misery, to err on the safe side. And if these Scriptures ask me to do nothing but what is reasonable and right—if they do not ask me to do anything that would either injure myself or my fellow-men, I ought to do it, unless, observe, I have the clearest and most indubitable evidence that these Scriptures are untrue. I think, then, that it is the part of a wise and sensible man to obey their commands immediately in the meantime, since he can't prove, nor have proved to him, that they are false. And that lest they should be true, I think that the belief of the whole of these Scriptures tends to the greatest happiness man can enjoy on earth, apart altogether from eternal happiness; and their commands, if all obeyed, would purify and render holy our depraved hearts, enable us to bear the ills of time, and give us still to everlasting joys. Still, to be reasonable, if he has not any evidence of their truth he should cherish a spirit of honest inquiry; and if he finds circumstantial evidence in beholding what I think are the works of God—what some here may think the spontaneous and necessitous result of material creation—corroborating the assertions

of scripture, his confidence in their truth should become stronger and stronger, and *vice versa*. But until he has the clearest, sensible evidence of their falsehood, is he, as a wise man, justified in disregarding and disobeying the commands of Scripture? I can see no evidence for the truth of atheism, but, on the contrary, in myself, on earth, on sea, and in the heavens do I find reasonable evidence corroborating the assertions of Scripture. I think, then, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of the same God who is the everlasting Lord—the creator of angels and men, who made the beasts of the earth and made man\* in his own image; and though he denounces sufferings eternal on the disobedient, still to all who will obey him everlasting life and happiness. And this every man can ask if he will, and God has said that he who asketh in his way shall receive. I am in favour of free inquiry, but heart-honesty and candour should accompany it.

The reply to all this the reader will easily supply for himself. I put it on record as a specimen of what is done by those into whose hands the ministers of Dundee are content to leave the defence of Christianity.

After our young friend of the written speech, two or three other disputants appeared, and many objections were urged to what I had advanced. On the last night Mr. Davison and another gentleman were promised hearings, after a due opportunity had been afforded to the local clergy and other Christians. When the time came for them to speak the hour was late, and our chairman, to whose energy we had been much indebted, was inflexible, and dissolved the meeting. I very much regretted this, as I was anxious to hear Mr. Davison. The disappointed speakers rushed to the platform, and the meeting after them. And many loud reproaches resounded through the hall. The chairman pushed one disputant off the platform and got into a struggle with the second; but Mr. Davison was as resolute in arms as in argument, and very properly resisted. I forced myself between the chairman and him, and with moral force, blended with as much physical as I could exercise, I pushed back the chairman and drew my opponent forward. To which the chairman was a consenting party, for he was strong enough to have pushed us both off. By this time all the lights but one were put out. The remaining one was just in front of the rostrum, and, like a policeman's 'bull's eye' in a crowd, revealed to the meeting a crowded platform, which might have served Martin for a model of Chaos. 'The time is up and over,' cried the proprietor or agent of the room. 'What,' I demanded, 'will be the consequence of our continuing?' 'It will be a guinea,' answered the troubled factor. 'I will pay the guinea,' I rejoined, 'but these gentlemen must be allowed to speak though we stay here all night.' I then sat down on the table, that being the only conspicuous seat in front of the meeting, and assumed to myself the chairmanship. Before me the audience spread themselves out in the darkness of the hall like the surges of the Tay in a night storm, loud, angry, dark, uncertain, and tumultuous.

As soon as silence was restored, the more noisy of the two opponents who demanded a hearing had nothing to say when called upon. Mr. Davison, when he could speak, declined because he thought the hour too late, and the meeting too unsettled to be instructed, in which he was right. Having vindicated his right to be heard, he was contented. The meeting resumed its good humour, general satisfaction was expressed, the extra guinea was not demanded, and twenty or thirty of us adjourned after twelve o'clock to celebrate Mr. Owen's birthday over lemonade, no coffee being obtainable at so late an hour.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

\* Our friend is a little confused here. This compliment was never paid to the beasts before.—G. J. H.



### Examination of the Press.

**MODES OF INTERESTING THE POPULACE.**—It is idle to look back upon the time—if such time there ever was—when the labouring classes could be confined to their daily labour, leaving to their superiors the government of the nation. Probably such a state of things never existed; the history of all times and all countries exhibits instances of the interference of the people in public affairs, by outbreaks unjust, fierce, and destructive in proportion to the ignorance of the multitude, and always fraught with an aggravation of the very evils they were intended to remove. But it is sufficient for the present purpose that such a state of things is incompatible with the political institutions of this country, and, in fact, does not exist. The Chartist and the Socialist zealously diffuse their opinions far and wide; they have erected halls and established places of meeting, in which they discourse to thousands; they invite persons of adverse opinions to listen to, and freely discuss, the expositions of their principles. The Socialists, especially, comprise in the plan of their societies some of the most useful and attractive objects of Mechanics' Institutions; they have lectures on the sciences, they have music, and, in some cases, other classes; and they add to these the occasional attraction of tea-parties, accompanied by dancing. The number of members of Socialist institutions in London is much smaller than that of members of Mechanics' Institutions, but the attendance at their lectures, discussions, and festive meetings is much greater than at the lectures and ordinary meetings of Mechanics' Institutions; and this is believed to arise principally from the fact that the rival institution offers to the workmen those things the exclusion of which from Mechanics' Institutions (especially the right of free inquiry) renders them, if not distasteful, at least uninteresting to him. When, therefore, the mechanic is told, that if he wishes to hear the rights and duties of men, as members of society, systematically expounded and temperately discussed, he cannot be gratified at the Mechanics' Institution, surely it is equivalent to saying—'You are curious to learn something respecting the economy of civil society, and to be assured of what we assert, that what now forms its cement is its best security: we withhold from you all information on these subjects; but at the Socialist hall opposite they will strive to prove to you how unnatural is that economy, and worthless that security.' Or again: he has heard men propose a change in the constitution of his country. He is led to believe that his interests are deeply concerned in the project; he has neither the time, the funds, nor the habits required to study published disquisitions about it, but he would be pleased to have the views of a few intelligent men who have been at the pains to acquaint themselves with the matter exhibited to him. No; he is told—'We explain to you the physical sciences; we demonstrate to you the atomic theory; we show you the orbits of the planets;—but the nature and advantages of our political constitution, a question which every newspaper more or less raises, and which is obtruded upon you and made a motive for your conduct at every election, shall not be taught or discussed here: nevertheless the Chartists in the next street handle it quite freely, and will spare no pains to induce you to adopt their opinions.' Thus we content ourselves with deploring the errors of the labouring classes, instead of striving to remove those errors even when ready means of doing so present themselves to us.—*Report of Mechanics' Institutions*, by Thomas Coates (pp. 29-31). Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. 1841.

**TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE INDUSTRY OF ALL NATIONS!**—Should the Great Exhibition be repeated a few years hence, the Machinery department may perhaps be enriched with an invention which will put the nose of Friar Bacon's Brazen Head quite out of joint. Mr. Alfred Smee, author of a work on 'Electro-Biology,' has just published another volume, entitled 'The Process of Thought,' wherein he says, that—'From the laws which have been already detailed, it is apparent that thought is amenable to fixed principles. By taking advantage of these principles, it occurred to me that mechanical contrivances might be formed which should obey similar laws, and give those results which some may have considered only obtainable by the operation of the mind itself.' In plain terms, Mr. Smee conceives it possible to construct a thinking apparatus; and he actually talks of a 'rational' and a 'differential machine,' by whose combined action he proposes to imitate the operations of the mind. If Mr. Smee can bring these contrivances of his to bear, he will confer a great boon upon the insane; as those who have lost their wits will then perhaps be enabled to have artificial brains made for them, as easily as a person who has suffered amputation is supplied with a wooden leg. Advertisements will invite our attention to 'An Entirely New Description of Intellectual Faculties,' or 'A New Discovery in Brains,' or Mr. So and So's 'Patent Cerebral Succedaneum, Warranted Never to Decay or Fall Out.' The progressive perfection of mental machinery will render it applicable to purposes of greater and greater delicacy, and we shall have automatic poets and musicians—mechanical Shaksperes and Beethovens—actuated by steam and electricity, instead of genius; and excelling live bards and composers as much as a power loom excels a hand loom. Cabinets will be literally constructed, by an improvement in cabinet-making, and the functions of Parliament will be executed by instruments evolving legislative wisdom.—*Punch.*

**EASTERN UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.**—The thirty-eighth Anniversary of this society was held on the 26th ult., at the Old Meeting, Gaol Street. The Rev. Henry Knott, of Bury St. Edmund's, delivered a discourse before the association, after which the congregation adjourned to a luncheon at the Crown and Anchor. The interest of the meeting was considerably enhanced by the presence of George Dawson, Esq., the Revds. J. Crompton, F. Macdonald, etc. The report of the association was read by the secretary, J. W. Dowson, Esq. A new feature of interest presented itself in the recommendation of the establishment of a local missionary, chapel libraries, &c. An interesting discussion ensued on some views advanced by the Rev. J. Crompton, who strongly inculcated the duty of encouraging a more catholic spirit, and suggested that by discontinuing the sectarian term *Unitarian*, an opening would be made for the admission of those who were prevented from joining the association in consequence of its title. The subject, however, dropped without any resolution being formally put. In the evening a party of about 130 ladies and gentlemen sat down to tea in the Corn Exchange, the Rev. Henry Squire in the chair. Mr. George Dawson, in his usual terse and vigorous style, addressed the meeting, touching upon a great variety of topics, and among others that of the Great Exhibition, of the results of which he did not entertain very high expectations. He objected to the parade of the names of the employers to the exclusion of the working men, and he complained that there were no representatives of the people at the opening. The Rev. J. Crompton addressed the meeting at some length on the subject of the fugitive slave law in America; and a resolution condemnatory of the law was carried unanimously.

### The Progress of the Intellect.

Of all the valuable works which Mr. Chapman has given to the public, none are more valuable than Robert Mackay's 'Progress of the Intellect.' Scholarly, yet enthusiastic—contemplative, yet vigorous—his powers work together with a fusion rare in one so gifted. His book is alike free from dogmatism or rhetoric; he neither abuses others' orthodoxy nor apologises for his own heresy; he is too much in earnest to wander from the road on such errands. But he analyses the very marrow of religion, philosophy, and belief, with the relentless searchingness of one who is determined not to rest while there is one ray of Truth to light his work. And his results are presented in language clear as mountain air, and radiant with intellectual beauty. Never, perhaps, was heresy more entrancing, or philosophy more majestic.

Ill health prevents me from attempting even the humblest analysis of the book; but I have extracted some of its finest passages for the benefit of those who may be unable to afford its high price. It needs only to add, that its main object is to aid in determining the Philosophy of Mythology—Greek, Hebrew, and Christian. The work is in two volumes, and is divided into ten parts, as follows:—

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| I. Intellectual Religion           | VII. Hebrew Theory of Retribution and Immortality |
| II. Ancient Cosmogony              | VIII. Notion of a Supernatural Messiah            |
| III. Notion of God, Metaphysically | IX. Christian Forms and Reforms                   |
| IV. Notion of God, Morally         | X. Speculative Christianity                       |
| V. On the Theory of Mediation      |   |
| VI. Hebrew Theory of Mediation     |   |

The first extract is condensed from the Preface, and will indicate the author's aim in his own words. The second is a condensation of Section 7, on Intellectual Religion. The foot-notes are abundant throughout the work, and refer to the numerous authors of all times and countries, whom Mr. Mackay calls to bear witness to 'the progress of the intellect,' and the majesty of truth.

PANTHEA.

#### MYTHOLOGY OF MODERN SOCIETY.

The study of mythology seems to be nearly abandoned amongst us except as a trifling matter of school routine. We value ourselves on knowledge of facts, and parade our indifference for fables. Yet this is affecting a superiority to which we have little right.

While we smile at past follies, the mythical element still holds its ground, not only in the opinions but even in the philosophy of the present.

In this consists the lasting interest of what is, by way of eminence, called mythology. It is but the exaggerated reflection of our own intellectual habits. An extreme instance is understood more easily than that which is familiar on a diminished scale. In times when the mythical element predominated, extending over many subjects from whence its

influence has now been partially removed, we are able to see more clearly its sources and effects. The understanding, like the eye, requires instruments to work with, and even now the severest experimentalist is greatly indebted to imagination for the means of gaining and expressing his conclusions. Something of the painful and arbitrary is inseparable from all forms of thought, and mythology is a useful warning against the error which was its essence, that of assigning reality to impressions, of confounding the inner sense with the external development.

The most serious consequence of misunderstanding the forms of ancient thought and expression is the estrangement between religious theory and common practice characteristic of our day. St. Paul arrived at his idea of a justify-

ing faith by reversing the natural course of thought; he argued from conceptions to facts instead of from facts to conceptions. The dogmatical theology derived from him has busied itself more with his conceptional machinery than his essential meaning. Hence the wide gulf between action and belief, which diverge, not only in their moral application, but in theoretic principle. Action assumes the natural relation of cause and effect, while religious profession is wholly mystical; the latter is based on a notion of magic, the other on that of science. The practical issue of the contradiction is compromise; to make up for lack of performance by unjustifiable appeals to Jupiter; adopting a principle for Sundays different from that suggested by every-day experience, neither heartily accepting the new philosophy nor remaining consistently faithful to the old. To bring morals and religion together by reconciling faith and practice, all that would seem to be required is to ascertain what the nature of the divine government really is; and if it be impossible *there* to discover any inconsistency, at once to discard the anomaly gratuitously introduced into human thought and practice.

It seems but too clear that the only way to better things lies through the labyrinth of theological controversy. In order to convince ourselves of what religion is, we must first become fully aware of what it is not. To the public such discussions are naturally distasteful, and that not only on account of the abstruse nature of the questions raised, and probably also from an instinctive appreciation of their comparative worthlessness, but in the presumption that the official depositories of the sacred oracles, knowing already all that can be known about them, are fully equal and faithful to their trust. But the principle of deputation may be carried too far. It is not every physician, even supposing him to be fully master of his profession, who will venture to prescribe an unpalatable remedy. If we neglect our own spiritual interests, we cannot be surprised if they miscarry. That they have so is clear, since the trustees are at issue among themselves, and many of them openly abandon their charge and church. It is hard to be called to do personally what we imagined had

already been effectually done by deputy, but there is no alternative. It is like being enrolled for the militia, troublesome but necessary. Yet, after all, the task, if resolutely taken up, will be found easier than we thought.

In this, as in many other cases, the real difficulty is not in the subject, but in fallacies of perverted ingenuity. Men deify brutes, their fellow-beings, their own ideas. In the break-up of old faiths some fall back upon a worship of form, while others take refuge in wild sentimentality. There are people whose religion consists in self-torture; who exclude themselves from the world, or think to please God by giving up to what they suppose to be his service something whose loss is felt to be injurious to their health or business; by consecrating a day out of the week to peculiar ceremonies, by fasting or other penance. Such extravagances result from misconceiving the character of the Deity and the relation in which we stand to him; from forgetting that religion tasks the whole man—not exacting a service of mere sentiment or imagination which reason disowns, but directing all the faculties to act in unison for the agent's good. The ancients were as the eagle intently gazing on what he wants strength to reach: we are the owls blinking at the first daylight, which, however, we are slowly learning to support. Our spiritual light is still sadly dimmed by Gothic windows and still more Gothic traditions; but clouds do not extinguish the light of heaven, religion will outlive theology, its lamp will be kindled afresh and burn brighter than before.

#### INTELLECTUAL RELIGION.

The basis of all our real knowledge is the reliance we place on the constancy and precision of nature. Nothing could be truly learned, nor any value attached to experience, but for the invariable connection of cause and effect, and the certainty and fixity of the laws of creation. When providential government is admitted to be regular and undeviating, then, and then only, is an unlimited field of exertion and education opened to the intellect.

Even the Chaldees would have abandoned their observatories in despair if

they had really credited the miracle of the dial of Ahaz, and there would be little prospect of obtaining any certainty in regard to the laws of meteorology if real efficacy could be supposed to attach to occasional petitions for rain or fine weather.

Science is the intellectual tribute to religion, for its office is essentially subservient to religious and moral practice, the knowledge of the true being immediately convertible into the doing of the right. The systematised records of experience, to which we give the name of science, are unsatisfying to man as a merely contemplative being, but exactly suited to his wants as an active and moral one. They teach him, not what is absolutely true, but what is true relatively to himself. He imbibes from experience a general sense of obligation simultaneously with the perception of truth, at first by that involuntary suggestion which resembles instinct, and afterwards through deliberate and self-conscious inferences. Nature, both within and without, has ever a definite aim, and inevitably makes him feel the powerful instrumentality by which she ensures the general accomplishment of her object. He is surrounded by incitements on the one hand and by checks and limitations on the other—being hemmed in, as it were, by circumstances, so as to be in some degree protected from injuring himself or others by wanton or involuntary indiscretions. But, until the understanding is developed, the economy of his being is unsafe and imperfect. A man's most important education begins at the maturity of his faculties, the time at which it is commonly supposed to end—when, for the first time, he becomes fully aware of the meaning and intimate connection between truth and duty, and when, from elementary pupilage, he may be said to be launched into the great school of the universe, where knowledge, self-interest, and sentiment, co-operating, lead him more securely in the path of duty and philosophy.

At first, all science appears merged in religion; afterwards, religion is, as it were, swallowed up in science. In proportion as men become familiar with the details of causation, language ceases to indulge in the vague generalities of religious poetry, and is ever more precise

and less mystical as knowledge becomes more accurate and full. Every grade of knowledge has its appropriate expression. Thus, what to an oriental mystic would be a plague of Egypt, or outpouring of divine wrath, gradually assumes the more homely name of a simoom or blight, and by a modern naturalist is further particularised as a peculiar development of electricity, an attack of animalcules or fungi. In both modes of expression a divine mover is equally contemplated—for no one more deeply feels the necessity of an intelligent cause than the student of nature, who sees throughout her empire a code of uniform procedure, ascertainable, and therefore dictated by reason. The more this agency is defined and understood, the more is its reality felt and its wisdom appreciated. Nay, it may be said that the religious sentiment can be matured only through scientific cultivation, since the more we know the more we venerate, and the reverence which is the joint result of sentiment and knowledge can alone survive the attacks of change or time, as being never chained to an obsolete opinion or an immoral practice. The causes of the degeneracy of science have been always the same as those which perverted religion. They consist in the estrangement of the one from the other, and of both from the understanding. Science and religion miscarried partly through the subjection of the intellect to the senses, partly through the involuntary pride which induced the mind to insulate its results, and to rely prematurely upon itself. The prejudices of the senses and the prejudices of opinion were equally unfavourable in both cases. The ancients failed in their science because they paid more regard to words and notions than to things, and in their religion because they believed they had become acquainted with the universal cause when they assigned to it an existence and a name, or sought an alliance with it in mystical rapture. They either hoped, like Moses, to obtain a manifestation of the deity to the eye, or to create an adequate image of him within the bounds of the isolated understanding. It was only through the imagination that they could hope to pass the interval between earth and heaven, for as yet there was no solid pathway

for the reason. They had a vague feeling that the universe is governed by eternal laws of justice; but the impression was only a rude anticipation of the legitimate discovery, an inference from the analogy of human government—and therefore often confounded with arbitrary volition or chance—not from an acquaintance with the government of nature. Even if they could have been aware of the existence of natural law in its true meaning, they knew not how to study or decypher it, so that it was still a mystery inoperative as a guide to deliberate choice and action. The stoical maxim, 'to live agreeably to nature,' was the nearest approach of antiquity to a perfect moral code: its defect was the impossibility of applying it when the study of nature was arrested, and when anticipated notions were assumed as final criteria of truth and right. Visionary theories were thus adopted by rival sects, and, while each had its element of truth, the Stoic erred on one side as much as the Epicurean on the other. If nature be a system of regularity and law, we must, in order to live agreeably to it, become acquainted with its laws; in other words, we must gain experience, and that not only in the ordinary sense of practical or worldly wisdom, but in its methodised form as science—the intellectual part of religion being only the gaining accurate experiences, reduced to general principles so as to be readily available, and accompanied by such a clear view of the resulting obligations as may ensure the realisation of its lessons. Religion, including morality, is therefore no more than well-directed education; and as the basis of all education must be the notion formed respecting the sources of knowledge and sanctions of duty, the first great education question is the essentially-religious one, how or upon what principles is the world governed? or rather, is it governed upon any prin-

ciple, since observances of prayer and belief in miracles inevitably tend to countenance the idea that the divine government is no more than a capricious exercise of grace and favour? Every duty, once ascertained, becomes obviously a religious duty, and the same sacred character appertains to every process for discovering its criteria with more ease and precision. That there should have ever been a doubt about the real evidences of these criteria can only have resulted from a delusion such as that which makes a savage fall down before the block of his own manipulation. The foundations of the right and good must be sought for in the legislation of nature, as the limits of social propriety are laid down in municipal regulations. Those general arrangements which, perceived either in the physical or moral world, baffle inquiry into their causes, are provisionally assumed as laws of nature, that is, as ultimate expressions of a divine volition, conveying to us such a partial knowledge of the universal order as may be a sufficient guide in cases beyond the reach of instinct. The first elements of the task of discovering them are easy, but its range is the intellectual business of eternity. On the preliminary scene of the drama of mental development each individual pursues, with more or less aid from preceding experience, his appointed task, a humble one perhaps in itself, yet glorious when considered as part of an endless career of improvement, a contribution to that eternal monument, the great wonder of the modern world, which, though often exposed like those of Babel or Memphis to interruption and dilapidation, is unlike them and the philosophical and religious systems of which they may be regarded as types, for ever repaired and renewed, slowly but surely rising towards the unoffended heavens through the co-operation of diversified tribes and tongues.

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[To be concluded in next number.]

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## THE FREE WILL OF CHRIST.

SIR,—In *Reasoner* No. 270, the Rev. Mr. Fleming endeavours to free the Divine character from imputation with reference to the crucifixion of Christ. This reverend gentleman states that the Death of Christ was, on his part, voluntary, free, and self-chosen, and therefore cannot tell against the Divine character; by which we are to understand that Deity could not possess that purity ascribed to him and have caused or compelled Christ's death. Now as it was voluntary on Christ's part, if he had thought fit the crucifixion might not have taken place, and consequently the world have been unredeemed unto this day. Then what is to become of the saying continually heard from the pulpits, namely, 'without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins?'

Mr. Fleming, in representing Christ's death as self-chosen, represents it as unnecessary, because that which is inevitable cannot be voluntary; he therefore contradicts both theology and Christ's own words, where he says to his disciples 'Oh fools, and slow of heart. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?' And 'beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.' If his death was voluntary and might not have been, then the whole of the Prophecies referring thereto might have been false, and consequently could not be any foundation for the inspiration of the Scriptures. But Christ seemed to be of a different opinion as to the voluntariness of his death, when he said 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;' clearly showing that so far as he was concerned he would rather not have suffered, and that he died because it was not possible for him to avoid it. But our spiritual pastors tell us of the promise that the seed of the woman *shall* bruise the serpent's head. The Prophet Isaiah speaks more like an historian than a prophet, where he says 'unto us a child is born,' and that he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, that the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. It is said that the parting his garments was to fulfil the Scriptures, that Christ chose one of the twelve, being a devil, the son of perdition, and that Satan entered into him for the purpose. Will Mr. Fleming say there was any voluntariness in all this on the part of Christ Jesus? If not, then he must find some other foundation on which to defend the divine attributes.

Mr. Fleming would seem to teach that God's secret decrees could not influence the moral conduct of men. Then will he tell us how, seeing that the soldiers should part Christ's garments and cast lots on his vesture, they could do otherwise; or that when the Romans had to pierce his side and give him vinegar to drink, they could do otherwise? Why, we are told by Christ that those things were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. It cannot alter the necessity of the case that the actors might be ignorant of God's secret purposes, for whatever might be their motives the divine purposes of God could not be averted by mortals.

Will Mr. Fleming show how Deity can positively know that such and such events *will* come to pass, that men *will* think and act in a certain manner, and that these events can possibly not come to pass? Christ said that these things must needs be (meaning, I suppose, these events and actions); and if they were to be, I suppose the actors were compelled to obey God's revealed will, or they would have been in opposition to his secret purpose; they must therefore have been dis-

posed to do what was planned according to the eternal counsels of God before the world began—where, in some cases, the very men are pointed out. In fine, Mr. Fleming, in admitting that God had secret purposes and decrees on the greatest events, and on the death and resurrection of Christ, admits that if the Scriptures be true, Christ had no voluntary, free, spontaneous self-choice in the matter, and God therefore could not be Love, Truth, and Justice on his (Mr. Fleming's) grounds. I submit then, in conclusion, that such reasoners as Mr. Fleming must ever fail to convince the atheist of the attributes of Deity from Scripture, or of the falsehood of that moral philosophy which objects to the crucifixion of a child by its parent. X.

#### FURTHER REPLY TO MR. NORRINGTON.

SIR,—I do not know to what class of Christians your correspondent, Henry Norrington, belongs. I infer from his letter that he does not believe the Bible to be a revelation from a God as generally understood. I infer that he rejects what is inconsistent with his own feelings of truth. Now in this case I cannot see that the Bible (only so far as it contains moral truth) can be of more value than any other book. He writes in a liberal spirit, and is worthy all courtesy and attention. He conceives that your abilities are misapplied. For, says he, 'In attempting to destroy Christianity you must remember you are destroying all the goodness and virtue that it embraces, as well as its supposed evils.' A quotation from your 'Logic of Death' will, I think, refute this statement. On the fifth page he will find—'To me it is an axiom that there is nothing higher than morality: therefore, whatever I find in the Bible below morality (and I find much), I reject—what I find above it, I suspect—what I find coincident with morality (whether in the Old Testament or the New), I retain. I make Morality a standard. It is therefore that I call myself a Moralist rather than a Christian. It seems to me that there is nothing in Christianity which will bear the test of discussion or the face of day, nothing whereby it can lay hold of the world and move it, which is not *coincident with morality*. Therefore morality has all the strength of Christianity without the mystery and bigotry of the Bible.'

If instead of this—'Instinct, and all but universal assent, proclaim the Great First Cause; and an opinion so widely, deeply, and long assented to, has its foundations in a truth that cannot be safely ignored'—he had said 'Man's ignorance and curiosity have called into being Gods and rulers of this world (for there are Lords many and Gods many), which invocation, becoming popular and of selfish interest to the people, backed by a multitude of men called priests (who live upon the credulity of the people) who have instilled this dogma into the minds of men from their earliest youth, that it has become to be received by fettered minds almost as an instinct'—I think this would have been nearer the mark.

He says that infidelity is preferable to devils, hell fire, and the like—which he will find taught in the Bible. He seems to forget that Christianity had its birth in immorality. Does he not remember the miraculous conception? unnatural, impossible, and contrary to all scientific knowledge. Does he forget that God's vengeance was appeased by a vicarious sacrifice—or will he say that these are not parts of Christianity, when the mass of Christians hold them as the bulwark of their faith? E.

[We wish papers on the Independence of Morality, setting forth the grounds thereof, which will form the most useful answer.—Ed.]



## THE BIBLE AN ARCHÆOLOGICAL CURIOSITY.

SIR,—The Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland held their annual meeting in Bristol this year. Amongst other papers read in the sections was one by E. A. Freeman, Esq., of Trin. Coll., Oxon, on the 'Preservation and Restoration of Ancient Monuments,' in which he laid down as a principle that it was nothing short of pure, unmitigated Vandalism to interfere in any way with ancient works of art—whether they were castles, churches, temples, sculptures, or anything of the kind—to restore them, or to remove them from their original position *in situ*, with a view to their preservation. He denounced Lord Elgin in severe terms, and by no means approved of Layard's proceedings, although it is known, from the nature of the material, that a few showers of rain would effectually remove all traces of sculpture from the Nimroud marbles.

Well, sir, you will perceive from what follows that this opinion of Mr. Freeman is an established principle with archæologists generally. They venerate the past to such a degree that, whatever may be its faults, they would not mend them for the world: 'touch not, handle not,' is their motto. A Mr. Warner read a paper on Tyndale's New Testament, after which a Member, in the course of other remarks, said, 'He had seen an advertisement, some years since, of a Bible—a new translation of the Bible—with 20,000 emendations; why, in this, errors might creep in, not only of doctrine, but of philological criticism. Their duty as Christians and as archæologists would lead them to oppose that translation.' After which J. S. Harford, Esq., D.C.L., of Blaze-castle, near Bristol, said that, as President of the Archæological Institute on this occasion, he should not be discharging his duty to the public were he not to express his conviction that with respect to the authorised translation of the Bible, there was the most deep reverence for that translation, not only throughout the members of the Church of England, but of the great body of Dissenters, and that if there was a proposal brought forward for a new translation, as far as his knowledge of the sentiments both of the Church and of the great body of Dissenters went, he was convinced it would meet with the strongest and most unqualified opposition. He would speak but humbly as a scholar, but, as far as his acquaintance with the Greek language went, he could not conceive a translation so faithful to the sense of the original as their authorised translation. He was perfectly aware that there were many particular expressions where some slight alteration might be introduced with advantage, but he would oppose any proposition of the kind, because they were not in general important points, and therefore any alteration of the translation in such a way might lead to a great many more, and produce the effects which had been very properly objected to. He had made these few observations because he felt that, perhaps, some impression might go forth to the public, from the observations of the learned member of the institute, which he was sure he did not mean to convey, that there was amongst the members of the institute a disposition for such inquiry.

Now, sir, after reading the above, am I not justified in considering the Bible an archæological curiosity? The authorised versions of the Old and New Testaments have the hoar of two centuries upon them, and they are dedicated to that 'triple-piled-ass,' James, as Pemberton designates him. For two hundred years millions have been placing implicit confidence in the power of a certain book, said to contain God's word, and *no mistake*, to secure them an eternity of happiness when they die; but this book is now said to contain *twenty thousand errors*, and some of them of

the greatest moment. 'What of that?' say the archæologists; 'if you correct those 20,000 errors you are not sure you will not leave or make others. Leave the book alone. You shall not touch it. Renovation is desecration. The errors and ruins of the past are our exclusive property—we reverence and adore them—the greater the ruin the greater the beauty; and any infidel attempt to restore the Bible to that purity which increased knowledge of the languages in which it was written (which would now be an easy task) shall "meet with our strongest and most unqualified opposition." We will guard its errors with jealous care; and if men should come to despise it as a lie, because of those errors, we will love it the more because it is a lie of the past; and would rather see it perish from off the face of the earth than a single word or point should be altered in it!' Oh wonderful *savans*! Oh venerable Dryasdusts! You may as well entomb yourself in an Egyptian catacomb, in the vain hope that the world will stop revolving because of your absence from the light, as imagine that anything will any more be held so sacred as to be exempt from criticism and exposure and correction, if needs be. The amended Bible *has* been published for some time, and I feel pleasure in saying that I have found some Christians who are not archæologists, and who think it a commendable thing to correct any errors that may be discovered in the translation of what they consider the word of God. Mr. Harford is, *par excellence*, one who would have *all* education based on the Bible, and yet who would offer his 'strongest and most unqualified opposition' to any attempt to impart secular education, or to correct the errors in the class-book he would force upon all parties! Mr. H. has been a candidate for a seat in parliament once or twice—how admirably qualified for the office!

Bristol, August 2, 1851.

W. CHILTON.

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#### THEY BELONG TO US.

SIR,—On Sunday morning, June 29<sup>th</sup>, the Reverend Mr. Duncan, while preaching in the Presbyterian Chapel, North Shields, uttered the following incomprehensible sentence:—'The Temperance Movement, the Peace Movement, and Sanitary Reform, are all atheistic in their character(!). The whole is an attempt to take the regeneration of man out of God's hands.' It is painful to hear remarks like these from educated men; they place themselves in the position of the dog in the manger—they will not work in the cause of human progress themselves. The spirit of Mr. Duncan's sermon amounted to this, that heaven was not for the industrious labourers in the cause of human progress, but for lazy believers, who sit in their easy chairs waiting for the millennium coming. It is a pity that the reverend gentleman should have lived so long and not discovered the truth of the adage, 'God helps none but those who help themselves.'

JOHN RICHARDS.

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[We are certainly indebted to Mr. Duncan for assigning three such excellent movements to us.—ED.]

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#### REPORT FROM POPLAR.

SIR,—Though I have for some time been silent, I have not been altogether idle. Since I last communicated with you I have regularly taken four copies weekly of

the *Reasoner*, one of which I preserve for binding, the other three being circulated. The tracts are read with much interest. There are now three booksellers in Poplar in the windows of whose shops the *Reasoner* may be seen—Elliott of Pennyfields, Brown of High Street, Stout of Victoria Place, West India Road. One of these told me, some time ago, that he was frequently asked to dispose of my copies (he supplies me) from the window; and I desired him at all times to sell them when asked, and get me others.

I shall certainly adopt your suggestion of taking my own private copy in monthly parts. I frequently, in accepting of a religious tract from the distributors at the railway stations and elsewhere, give a *Reasoner* in exchange. Indeed I seldom go out without a few in my pocket for distribution.

L.

**Reasoner Propaganda.**

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 272, 571s. 2d.—Mr. Todd, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1s.—Mr. Bedlington, Middlesbro', 2s.—George Watson, do., 2s.—George Grant, do., 1s.—A Friend, do., 1s.—Robert Thursfield, do., 1s.—A Friend, do., 1s.—John Wilson, Stockton-on-Tees, 2s.—James Gray, 1s. 4d.—Total, 583s. 6d.

**GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.**

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.—August 24th [7½], Robert Cooper, 'The Monster Nuisance of the Age—what is it?'—26th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.'  
Hall of Science, City Road.—August 24th [7½], a lecture.  
National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Aug. 24th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.  
Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'  
Arepagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.  
City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.  
Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.  
City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

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## Our Open Page.

THE *Times*, of Feb. 28th, 1844, remarked—‘We have been favoured with a copy of a pamphlet entitled “An Appeal to the Members of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, on doctrinal changes lately introduced into the series of tracts circulated under their authority.” The author’s censures are levelled against a tract—or, more properly speaking, against the Society for countenancing a tract—written by the Bishop of Chester, on the “Doctrine of Justification by Faith only,” which is said to exhibit a view of that doctrine wholly at variance with that taken by the great body of Anglican divines. It should be remembered; then, that a society constituted, as this is, on purely voluntary principles, and composed of members of all shades of opinions, must necessarily conduct its operations on very different principles from those on which a church is entitled to act. A church governs its members—a society is governed by them. In the former, the several degrees of dignity secure order and obedience—in the latter, a layman is on an equality with a bishop. It is obvious, therefore, that where differences of opinions exist—and in what society do they not?—those who hold them must, if they would work together, consent to lay aside their points of dispute, and confine themselves to those upon which they are agreed. If they do otherwise, they cease to be a society. We say this is what common sense suggests; but, unfortunately, the heat of controversy stimulates a more arbitrary course, and aims at securing the predominance of one or other party at the expense of the common consistency. Yet who does not see that such a course as this must be the ruin of any society, and especially of one which professes to teach Christian knowledge? People will say—“First of all, gentlemen, settle among yourselves what is Christian knowledge, and then we shall be happy to listen to you.” The Society, we believe, consists exclusively of members of the Church of England—is there really no point of doctrine or practice which they can promulgate in common?’

On the second day of the Peace Congress at Exeter Hall, the Rev. Henry Garnett said—‘Even within the last few days he had seen a missionary pamphlet, in which the necessity of an army to support the missionaries on the coast of Africa was urged with all the power of the writer. He could not help asking himself, upon reading it, what sort of a religion, what sort of Christianity was that which required to be enforced at the point of the bayonet?’

Will ‘A Minister’s Son’ favour us with his name and address.

A District of the National Charter Association has been formed at Hoxton, called the ‘Hoxton Chartist Locality.’ The meetings take place every Thursday evening, at a quarter past eight o’clock, at the Hope Coffee House, 18, Bridport Place, New North Road.

Of German epigrams, Dr. Bowring renders these examples:—

‘You wish for age, yet fear to die;  
Is pain, then, sweeter than tranquility?’  
‘Many have died on valour’s field,  
And many a man disease has killed;  
But lust, and wine, and luxury call  
To death’s dark mansion more than all.’

# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## MR. G. J. HOLYOAKE'S LECTURES IN WHITEHAVEN.

(FROM THE 'WHITEHAVEN HERALD.')

MR. HOLYOAKE from London, editor of the *Reasoner*, has been delivering a course of lectures in the Theatre, in this town, during the present week (ending August 16.) The first lecture was delivered on Tuesday evening, and was, as stated in the advertisement, an 'Examination of the moral innocency of speculative opinions where conscientiously entertained, with a view to determine how far a man may dissent from the religious belief of his neighbours, and yet live in Truth and die in Peace;' and the second was delivered on the evening following (Wednesday), the subject being 'Catholicism the actual type of the churches around us, and their influences upon society examined.'

### FIRST LECTURE.

Mr. Holyoake commenced his first lecture by stating the difficulty he experienced in presenting a new subject to his auditory, in doing justice to the integrity of individual conviction without wounding, what ought never to be wounded wantonly, the conscientious opinions of others. His purpose was to show that a certain moral innocence attached to all opinions, and that an honest man might hope to live in truth and die in peace, though differing with his neighbours upon speculative points. The history of religious opinion in this country, said Mr. Holyoake, showed that this truth had been acknowledged some two centuries ago throughout Europe, though but imperfectly comprehended in the present day. The dominant church in the days of Luther held the opinions Luther represented, to originate not in conscience so much as in wickedness. But the patient endurance of the martyrs in imprisonment and in death at length established the conviction that, though these men might be erroneous in their views, they must be sincere or they would cease to suffer voluntarily. The long succession of struggles in the name of various forms of dissent, from the Established Church down to the Unitarian body—at once the pride of heresy though the shame of the church—sufficiently attested that, though we might regret the eccentricities of private judgment, there was no longer any question as to the earnestness of conviction manifested by these parties. Bunyan, the tinman, had excited astonishment by the vagaries of his soul as well as by his matchless allegory, the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' They might deny the wisdom of his faith, but they could not deny the honesty with which he held it when he endured twelve years' imprisonment in its vindication. The new and reluctant truth was then forced upon Europe, that the errors of opinion might coexist with perfect sincerity. After the martyrs came the philosophers, who established that such was the nature of the human understanding, that assent to a proposition was always governed by the law of evidence—that the man who avowed his disbelief of a given proposition, which he felt to be untrue, was as honest and as virtuous as he who proclaimed his accordance with what was established to his satisfaction. In such cases in which the evidence on both sides of the proposition seemed equally balanced, doubt became inevitable, and what

was inevitable was innocent. When this came to be perceived, divines then commenced a classification of opinions. They no longer applied one incoherent and opprobrious epithet to those who differed from them, but endeavoured to describe them by that term which expressed the exact degree of their dissent. The church was as much indebted to the establishment of this truth as freedom of opinion, and divines learned how to proportion argument so as to effect conviction, and the people learned moderation and even respect for those who conscientiously differed from them. Mr. Holyoake then addressed the application of the principle he had endeavoured to establish to the conduct pursued by the Christian of every denomination, who always founded his preference for his own faith to its apparent reasonableness over all others, showing that we instinctively made reasonableness the mark of our preference in self-protection and in truth. Mr. Holyoake attached particular importance to the fact that some eminent bishops, Whately and Hampden, philosophers like Mackintosh, divines like Chalmers, and civilians like Newman, had admitted that morality to a certain extent was independent of religion, and had a natural foundation of its own. It might be that this morality was inferior to that deducible from religious grounds, but the possibility of it could no longer be denied. It therefore followed that those who said the Rationalist was without morality, could only mean that he was without their morality. It was clear that he had grounds for morality, founded upon the nature of things. Secularists was perhaps the proper designation of all who dissented, extremely from the religious opinions of the day. They were as anxious as the religious men that order should prevail, truth should be cherished, and justice observed, but the difference consisted in tracing the reason on which their ethics reposed to human nature and the constitution of things. At the conclusion of the lecture, which was listened to without the slightest interruption, various questions were put to the speaker tending to elicit objections to the views of the querists. Mr. Holyoake gave his answers to such questions as seemed relevant to the subject of his lecture, and explained that if he should enter upon topics foreign to the subject announced for discussion, the public would have a right to complain. He was bound to preserve his own consistency as a guarantee of his intentions to keep faith with the public.

#### SECOND LECTURE.

On the second night Mr. Holyoake began by adverting to the test which philosophers were agreed upon as to the truth of opinion in a demonstrable sense, namely, when a subject had been fully discussed in a fair field of inquiry and come to be generally adopted afterwards. A proposition might be true though not subjected to this ordeal—the human chances of its truth were greater to them where this course was pursued. In all matters relating to eternal interests, where the risks of belief were so imminent and the final issue so distant, it did seem to him (the lecturer) of the utmost importance that the freest debate should be invoked in self-protection. The Roman Catholic Church was the oldest church of Europe, the most coherent in doctrine and compact in organisation. True, special Scriptural texts could not perhaps be quoted in favour of each one of its tenets, but they seemed all to arise in inevitable *inference* from New Testament doctrine—and every form of faith was, after all, inference—creed was but the expression of religious conclusion. Catholicism proceeded on the principle of Authority, and worked by three agents, Terror, Inquisition, and Persecution. Reason, trusted throughout, was the only proper antagonist of Catholicism: it was easy to see how the Authority of the Catholic Church was copied in all churches around us. As the follower of St. Peter he puts you down in the name of the Church, so the

Lutheran puts you down in the name of saving Faith, and the Dissenter did it in the name of saving Grace; the Unitarian in the name of Heart-feeling, and the Pantheist in the name of Sentiment. Thus all churches were types of one great original. In the clinging to miracle and prophecy, so common in Christian controversy, we saw the preference for authority over reason. He (the lecturer) was no antagonist of Authority *per se*. His object was to substitute the authority of Reason for that of mere names. He then proceeded to explain that since the days when a visible Hell floated upon the Arno, that the same principle of terror had been cherished among Christian sects, the Unitarians being the only eminent body of Christians in whom humanity triumphed over dogma, and gave its voice against the doctrine of eternal punishment. Our pulpits in words imitated the Catholic Church in its pictures, and spoke to us the terrors that Rome painted. All proceeded to use the formula of Herbert Spencer on the principle of changing *conduct* instead of *character*. No one could travel from town to town in this great country and not discover that an Inquisition into opinion was the characteristic of all orthodox churches. People could be counted in every meeting, who were put in dread on account of the books they read, the lectures they heard, the friends they met. We laboured under a priestly surveillance at once the disgrace of the church and the shame of the people. How was it if Christianity was a source of love and gentle speech, that he who could not accept its doctrines was met with so much rudeness? Intercourse or controversy with Christians ought to be both safe and pleasant, especially with clergymen who added the refinement of education to the graces of the true faith. Yet he had melancholy proof everywhere that it was dangerous to fall into the hands of the Christian. Loss of station to the gentleman, loss of place to the workman, loss of social recognition generally were too commonly the bitter fruits reaped from the prevalence of the Christian doctrine—proving too clearly that persecution was an integral element in Christianity, arising from the conviction that there was but one way to heaven, which naturally stimulated all who believed themselves in the possession of that secret, to the coercion of others into the way in which they saw fit to walk. The lecturer then defended the doctrine of Reason against the charge of leading to Anarchy, and was listened to throughout with great attention. Some questions were put by the audience. Such as were relevant Mr. Holyoake replied to; but his answers were apparently unsatisfactory to some of the questioners, who did not, however, conduct themselves in a very creditable manner.

[Mr. Holyoake writes that he was in much more personal danger in Whitehaven than in Lancaster. An account of the proceedings in this place will appear. Mr. Holyoake has returned to London, but proceeds next week to Lancashire. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday last he lectured in the Calton Convening Rooms, Edinburgh.]

#### DELAY NOT FAILURE.

'WHATSOEVER is, is right;' and therefore we must consider even error right while it has power to exist; but, by the same rule, the opposition of those who fight against error must also be right, or it would not have existence. These facts should be constantly borne in mind; and, in combating error, the attack should be made with the comforting assurance that, even in present failure, the foundation is being laid for future success—for, in the course of our opposition to error, we are prepared for the truth to be attained by triumph.

On a superficial view of the matter, it seems astonishing that an institution so full of error as the Church of England should exist at this moment; but, on test-

ing the matter by the rule just cited, the wonder must give place to a conviction of its existence from necessity. This admits of a very simple explanation. If, immediately on the discovery of error in a great system, that system were demolished, in the confusion consequent thereon, instead of being relieved of the absolute amount of error contained in the system overthrown, the community would probably be saddled with a new system equally erroneous, though perhaps in a different direction. Whereas, by a lengthened investigation and gradual accumulation of evidence, the fallacies of the institution are clearly and minutely exposed, and we are enabled to found a system in which the errors which disfigured the former one shall be carefully avoided. We should never, therefore, grow tired of opposing error; the delay of our success merely shows that the proper time has not yet arrived, and, in the meanwhile, we are increasing our ability to make good use of victory when we shall be in a position to obtain it.

There can be no doubt that the Church of Rome was the means of effecting great good at the time of its establishment in England, and since that period; but the good of this world is comparative, and it is a long process from one degree to the next. In time, the Church of Rome lost its character in the eyes of certain men, who straightway set about organising and carrying on an opposition to its influence. That opposition was, to a certain extent, successful, but not before an immensity of labour and suffering had been bestowed on the task. The Church of Rome, albeit not destroyed, was disclaimed, and Protestantism was established in this country.

'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.' These are Saint Paul's words. But the first Protestants considered themselves justified in withholding their obedience from the Church of Rome, on the ground of its innumerable errors and absurdities—notwithstanding which fact, their successors in the present day insist strongly on the observance of the injunction towards themselves, although we are able to detect quite as much, if not more, error in the Church of England than their predecessors discovered in the Church of Rome. But we, in this age, have the same right to attack the Church of England as they had to attack the Church of Rome in theirs, and we have their own example to support our claim. It is clear, however, that the Church of England has a mission to perform, and therefore it still exists. But the resistance to the Church of England has a mission likewise, and therefore it continues. What are the missions to be worked out jointly by the church and its opponents? What is the explanation of the apparently inconsistent fact, that both error and its foes are alike necessary at the same time?

The Church of Rome conferred a benefit on the world, inasmuch as it prepared the way for the purer, though not pure, Protestant faith. Protestantism, of which the Church of England is the representative, in like manner has elevated the minds of men above its own level. Dissent has sprung up, and with it opposition to the establishment. But, as yet, the establishment has survived; the opposition has been unable to effect its overthrow. But this by no means tends to demonstrate the final supremacy of the establishment. It rather proves that as yet we are not prepared for the liberty which would result from the downfall of the church. It proves that there is still something for the church to do, still something for its opponents to learn—that the church still has power to exist, because its opponents have not yet the power to raise up a better system in its place. But it also proves that we should waste no time; the greater our efforts to understand and to expose the errors of the establishment the sooner the establishment will cease, and the better we shall be able to found a system worthy to succeed it. EQUITA.



### Examination of the Press.

THE MORMON PROPHECY.—A new work has been recently published, entitled 'The Mormons; or, Latter-day Saints. With Memoirs of the Life and Death of Joseph Smith, the "American Mahomet."' Reviewing which the *Athenæum* observes:—Had a Rabelais or a Swift told the story of the Mormons under the veil of allegory, the sane portion of mankind would probably have entered their protest against the extravagance of the satirist. The name of the mock hero, the ignorance and want of character of his family, the low cunning of his accomplices in the fraud, the open and shameless vices in which he indulged, and the extraordinary success of the sect founded by his enthusiasm—would all have been thought too obviously conceived with a view to ludicrous effects. Joseph Smith is indeed a curious comment on the age. His revelations should be a lesson to the orthodox in both hemispheres. That the Smiths—the family of the prophet—were far below the usual level of intelligence in America, is not denied by their followers. That their private lives would not bear looking into, they themselves admitted. With a Danton-like audacity, the new prophet at once and for ever silenced such enemies as adduced his ignorance, his vices, and his debts as militating against his prophetic character, by acknowledging all these to the fullest extent, and extracting from them an argument in favour of his larger share of divine grace. A prophet who could not spell—a Bible full of the grossest errors of grammar—might seem strange anomalies to the children of this world; but Joseph reminded his disciples—as George Fox had done on a similiar occasion—that God does not stand in need of human learning—probably never having heard how finely South had already disposed of the fallacy when he replied, 'If God do not stand in need of human learning, still less does He stand in need of human ignorance.' But, it is alleged, if the Book of Mormon be a forgery, it is not the forgery of a man utterly devoid of letters. This is true. Gibbon doubted whether Mohammed could write; yet it is confessed, even by Christian scholars, that the Koran is one of the most eloquent of books, and the very model of pure and nervous Arabic. Now, in spite of its errors of grammar and its absurdities of doctrine, the Book of Mormon is a clever book. It exhibits no slight acquaintance with history and archæology, and has a facility of invention not to be hoped for in the works of a man entirely illiterate. But then arises the question—Did Joseph Smith write it? We set aside the story of the supposed finding of the golden plates from which he told his dupes that he translated it—not because we feel bound to reject the idea of ancient writings being discoverable in America—but from an entire unacquaintance with any mode by which an unlettered man could faithfully translate the terms of a forgotten language. On this point there has been much discussion in America; and the evidence in explanation of the fraud practised by Smith is, in our opinion, complete and satisfactory. The real author of the Book of Mormon was, it appears, a Rev. Solomon Spaulding—who wrote it in the first instance as a romance.'—*Athenæum*, August 16th, 1851.

NEW DRESS OF WOMEN.—The women of America are justly assuming independence as to dress. The *Leader* has rendered interesting accounts of their new taste in costume, and the comments it calls forth. The *Leader* of Saturday, August 16, adds this comment on the 'Bloomer Revolt:—Is not this anarchy frightful? Next we shall see Englishmen wearing garbs that best suit their aspect and avocations: shopmen democratically giving up the attempt to be mistaken for Lords and Baronets; even Lords probably, such is the depravity of human nature,

giving up the attempt to look like waiters; working-men content to look like working-men, and not like seedy gentlemen employing the most inept of tailors; girls content to look lovely, and various as the tints of their hair; and the world in general content to become picturesque. No; that cannot be; to be picturesque is what no *Englishman* would ever submit to be thought—VULGAR. Beauty is for the theatre, the painter's studio, and other haunts of vice. Respectability is always ugly: if it for an instant ceases to be so, it begins to doubt itself. In the United States they are not tormented by these considerations, because they are Republicans, and Republicans are never respectable. Handsome is that handsome does: if English wives were to become handsome, away with conjugal fidelity, with our institutions, our monarchy, &c. You cannot remove one inch of the social fabric without pulling down the whole—so firmly is it built! Englishmen, then, will continue to dress themselves like bricks—all alike.

**DIVINE SOCIALISM.**—The term 'Socialism' is not now regarded with the horror it once was in this country, although it has, certainly, been used to signify the wildest and most irrational system of morals and policy. The object of 'Divine Socialism,' by Newman Hall, B.A., is to undo the mischief which has arisen to society from the miserable conduct of Christians from the earliest times to the present, and who, so far from being that which they have but caricatured, have led multitudes to suspect and disown Christianity altogether. This is not to be wondered at. We think Mr. Hall would have done well to have pointed out more forcibly the great evils which have been inflicted by priesthoods of all classes; for instance, what can be thought of religion itself if the Wesleyan ministers, in their tyranny over the people, are to be taken as its proper exponents? The greatest evil of the ministerial order has been the possession of power, which, somehow, they never know to use with propriety, thereby disgusting numbers within and without the church, and driving the masses from them into the formation of systems of their own on the principle of 'Every man his own priest.' How comes it that the working classes of this country belong neither to the church nor to the chapel? Is Christianity at fault, or its professed disciples and ministers? We read of Christ that 'the common people heard him gladly.' Is it so now? Look at the conduct of the papal ecclesiastics at Rome at the present moment, tyrannising over the souls and bodies of their fellow-creatures as if they were brute beasts. What is the consequence at Rome? The people are all infidels to the faith; and as for the Pope, the head of the system, with his resistance to toleration in Spain, he is regarded, not as the representative of Christ, but as a drivelling fanatic. Yet we have the admirers of the Pope in this country, who can see no fault in him, most of whom are of the priestly order. We sincerely wish success to Mr. Hall's object in writing this book, that of promoting the advance of a safe, social reformation, and of a manly, unsectarian Christianity; but we would just hint to him, and others with like objects, that, if they wish their works to make way among the masses, they must offer them at a cheaper price. If Mr. Hall thinks that those for whom his little work is designed will give eightpence for it, in order to have their prejudices removed, he is simply mistaken. The infidel writers of the present day understand the power of cheapness, and we are certain that a work of the size of 'Divine Socialism' would have been issued by them for threepence or fourpence. Such a work as 'Divine Socialism,' to do any good, ought to circulate by the million; but those for whom it is intended will look twice at eightpence before they part with it for even 'Divine Socialism.'—*Birmingham Mercury*.

## The Progress of the Intellect.

[Concluded from last number.]

THE work in which philosophy and religion co-operate is effectually promoted only when the mind is humble, distrustful of itself, and trained in conformity with these conditions. If it attempts to forestall the industry of future ages by premature theories and creeds, to idolise its notions and entities, and whether on scientific or religious grounds to treat its acquired experiences as final, its progress is arrested at the point where it parted from philosophy, like a degenerate artist who unconsciously forsakes nature in the spirit of mannerism and self-repetition. All notions are subjective, and between human truth and error there is only, strictly speaking, the difference of a greater or less degree of subjectivity. The more subjective class of ideas belong, in the history of the mind, to what is called the mythic age, but are, in fact, abundantly brought forth by the uneducated or ill-educated intellect in all ages. By correcting the inferences of the senses by reason, and those of reason by confronting them with nature—by distinguishing the knowledge thus obtained as containing different degrees of probability or certainty—we obtain, not indeed that absolute truth which the experience of the world has proved to be unattainable, but that knowledge of causes and consequences which conduces to our preservation and promotes our advancement. Education is the formation of the intellectual habits, not by that method which ruined the ancient philosophical schools, and which is still countenanced by modern opinion—‘the instilling truths’—for this presumes that we possess truth to an extent transcending human capability; but rather training the mind to the disposition and ability to seek truth, to acquire that philosophic spirit which has been said to be more valuable than any limited acquisitions of philosophy, and for this end to be prepared to surrender

to the spirit of truthfulness whatever acquired inferences have from time degenerated into prejudices and an obstinate adherence to which has always been its greatest impediment.

### FAITH.

Religion and science are inseparable. No object in nature, no subject of contemplation, is destitute of a religious tendency and meaning. If religion be made to consist only in traditional and legendary forms, it is, of course, as distinguishable from science as the Mosaic cosmogony from geology; but if it be the *ascensio mentis in Deum per scalas creaturarum rerum*\*—the evolving the grounds of hope, faith, and duty from the known laws of our being and the constitution of the universe—religion may be said to include science as its minister; and antiquity, which beheld a divinity in all things, erred only in mistaking its intelligible character, and in making it a mere matter of mystic speculation. In a more limited sense, religion may be contrasted with science as something beyond and above it, as beginning where science ends, and as a guide through the realms of the unknown. But the known and the unknown are intimately connected and correlative. A superstructure of faith can be securely built only on the foundations of the known. Philosophy and religion have one common aim; they are but different forms of answer to the same great question, that of man and his destination. Though differing in name, character, and language, their mission is similar; and they grew up under varying circumstances to supply the same want. When the human understanding was first roused to contemplate the problem of

\* The ascension of the mind to God by the ladder of created things.

its destination, it must have been instantly impressed with a sense of its helplessness and incapacity to furnish from its own resources a satisfactory solution. The problem must have been abandoned in despair if it had not been cleared up by the intervention of heaven. Those consolatory suggestions of ever-present nature, which convey even to the savage a rough answer to the great difficulty, together with the most necessary elements of religious truth, were hailed on their first announcement with an avidity proportionate to the want of them, and deferentially received and adhered to as divine intimations. The growth of philosophy was checked by the premature establishment of religions. These had grown out of a kind of imperfect and unconscious philosophy, and clothed in the poetic language of an early age had been reduced to a permanent system of dogmas and myths, calculated for a time to amuse and satisfy the doubts and aspirations of mankind. But religion, divorced from philosophy, became obsolete and inefficient. The great problem of nature recurred, and stronger and more intelligible evidence was required to justify the important results which religion had anticipated. Philosophy, properly so called, arose along with scepticism—when men were emboldened to appeal from authority to reason, to estimate the value of evidence, and to analyse the results of experience. There is a virtuous scepticism as well as a necessary faith—doubt, 'that best prism of the truth's rays,' is a part of true religion as well as of true philosophy, and the proudest boast of its modest and patient spirit is to be 'ever learning,' though never arriving at (perfect) truth. The wise of ancient as well as of modern times deeply felt the imperfect character of all merely human knowledge; they professed to be only as children gathering pebbles on the shores of the ocean—to see darkly, as through a glass, or vision, or out of the obscurity of a cavern. But the priestly sage was disposed to register his more cherished inferences of faith and hope in formularies too presumptuously rigid, to claim for them eternity and infallibility, and so place them, as supported by superhuman authority, aloof and apart from all other acquisitions, and from the natural revela-

tion out of which they really sprung. Tradition, implicitly received, took away from religion its power of conformity to the progress of human wants, and fixed it in a mould both fanatical and pedantic. Philosophy challenged this intellectual thralldom, and undertook to achieve for itself, upon independent grounds, a faith more in harmony with knowledge. But its efforts, though noble, were to a great extent frustrated by a misconception of its object. A divine and infallible creed could not be entirely replaced by the humbler pretensions of a rational one, and philosophy was baffled when in its early attempts it aimed at that certainty which religion had vainly pledged itself to supply. Yet philosophy, though nursed in scepticism, has eventually won both a certainty and a faith—a faith in many respects more durable than that idly inherited from tradition. The same experience which teaches rational beings to look beyond the immediate to the remote, furnishes them with grounds of confidence and encouragement for the task. Religion claims all the faculties as tributaries, and even imagination may, under due restrictions, help to exalt humanity, by raising it above the limits of the actual and by giving a more vivid expression to its hopes. Faith is, to a great extent, involuntary—it is a law or faculty of our nature, operating silently and intuitively to supply the imperfections of knowledge. The boundary between faith and knowledge is indeed hard to distinguish. We are said to know our own impressions—to believe in their reality, or in the existence of a substantial cause of them. It follows that the immediate as well as the more remote inferences from phenomena are the blended fruit of faith and knowledge—and that though faith, properly speaking, is not knowledge, but the admission of certain inferences beyond knowledge, yet it is almost impossible, in tracing back the operations of the mind, to find any, even the most elementary, inference which is not in some degree a compound of both, and which may not ultimately be resolved into a consistent belief in the results of experience. Faith, being thus the inseparable companion and offspring of knowledge, is, like it, liable to modification and correction—that which we call

our knowledge of the ultimate purpose of existence being, in fact, only a belief or inference from experience, which would lose its rational value if it were supposed to be so complete and infallible as to exempt us from the necessity of further reflection. All human knowledge must partake of the imperfection of the faculties through which it is derived, and the limited and unsatisfactory character of what we know leaves a wide and most important void to be filled up by our belief. But the more imperfect our knowledge the more necessary it becomes to examine with suspicion the foundations of the faith so closely connected with it. Faith, as opposed to credulity and to that blind submission to inexplicable power which usurped its name in the East, is an allegiance of the reason; and as 'the evidence of things unseen' stands on the verge of mysticism, its value must depend on the discretion with which it is formed and used. Like all the other faculties, the belief requires to be educated; as the feet are taught to walk, the lips and tongue to speak, so the capacity of belief must be taught how to build securely, yet not arrogantly, on the data of experience. Faith is not that belief of St. Augustine whose merit increased with the absurdity of the proposition, nor that which attributed to the instigation of God the real or projected murder of an only son. An irrational faith grew out of the opposite irrational extreme of incredulity, when men refused to believe the truth unless authenticated by sensuous evidence that confounded their understandings. True faith is a belief in things probable—it is the assigning to certain inferences a hypothetical objectivity, and upon the conscious acknowledgment of this hypothetical character alone depends its advantage over fanaticism, its moral value and dignity. Between the opposite risks of credulity and scepticism it must be guided by those broad principles of reason which all the faculties require for their regulation. Reason alone can in each case determine where credulity begins, and fix the limit beyond which the mind should cease to assign even a qualified objectivity to its own imaginations. In its advanced stages, faith is a legitimate result of the calculation of probabilities; it may transcend expe-

rience, but can never absolutely contradict it. Faith and knowledge tend mutually to the confirmation and enlargement of each other—faith, by verification, being often transformed into knowledge, and every increase of knowledge supplying a wider and firmer basis of belief. Faith, as an inference from knowledge, should be consistently inferred from the whole of knowledge; since, when estranged and isolated, it loses its vitality, and the estrangement is as effectual when it is hastily and unfairly inferred as where it is wholly gratuitous. The same experience which is the source of knowledge being, therefore, the only legitimate foundation of faith, a sound faith cannot be derived from the anomalous and exceptional. It is the avidity for the marvellous, and the morbid eagerness for a cheap and easy solution of the mysteries of existence—a solution supposed to be implied in the conception of an arbitrary and unintelligible rule—which has ever retarded philosophy and stultified religion. Faith naturally arises out of the regular and undeviating. The same unerring uniformity which alone made experience possible, was also the first teacher of the invisible things of God. It is this

'Elder Scripture, writ by God's own hand—  
Scripture authentic, uncorrupt by man,'

which is set before every one without note or comment, and which even Holy Writ points out as the most unquestionable authority by which both in heaven and earth the will of God is interpreted to mankind. If man is not permitted to solve the problem of existence, he is at least emboldened to hope and to infer so much from its actual conditions as to feel confident as to its results. Faith takes up the problem exactly where knowledge leaves it; and as from confounding the objects of the two have arisen the discords of sects and the puzzles of philosophy, so the discovery of their true relations and limits enables the mind to reconcile and account for the controversies of the past, and in some measure to penetrate the mysteries that occasioned them. Faith, the necessary evidence of the seen as well as the unseen, is the assumed basis of all inferential knowledge, for it is the only assurance we have of the reality of the

world in which we move and live. The external something whose existence we presume but cannot prove as the cause of our sensations, is as much an object of faith as the unseen Deity, or as the anticipated renewal of our existence. Habitually, but unconsciously, we depend on faith in every perception and every act, in every inquiry after truth and every expectation of a practical result. Faith, thus essential to material comfort and support, is, like the pulses of the heart, involuntary and intuitive. But, educated in the simplest things, the believing faculty becomes, in its ulterior development, an instrument for effecting the highest as well as the most ordinary purposes of our being, and opens to every one, as it did to Columbus, a new world. Life, intellectually as well as physically, is like 'a star hovering on the horizon's verge, between night and morning,' and we stand at the parting of the two roads imagined by the great idealist, Parmenides—between the ideal and the real, the seeming and the true. On one hand is the infatuation of the senses, leading to uncertainties of opinion; on the other, faith, secure under the control of reason. In the progress of thought, as the notional and external becomes more and more an object of distrust, the ideal proportionably increases in dignity and significance, and we feel through faith to belong more to the invisible and future than to the tangible and immediate. In the golden age, the two were undistinguished from each other. Evidence was then felt

rather than understood, and faith almost intuitive—the rationalist and religionist were one. When the tree of knowledge was separated from the tree of life, a dark and forlorn interval succeeded, during which human nature underwent long struggles of revolt and disquietude. More correct views of our migratory and divided citizenship redeem us from this downfall, and restore the intellectual balance. By faith, the companion of knowledge, the contradictory tendencies of our twofold nature are explained and reconciled. The condition of the world, the purposes of providence are no longer an impenetrable mystery. By faith we may be at once idealists and materialists, yet neither sensual nor mystical. While we stood upon our mere knowledge good seemed inextricably mixed up with evil, our world disfigured by a fall, and even knowledge itself doubtful or impossible. We lived in a world of phantoms, and all existence, even our own, might be made problematical. Idealism redeems the imperfections of our knowledge, through the intervention of belief. By faith, or that transcendental view which the spirit of religion superadds to science, the distant is brought near, the temporary is made continuous, the finite infinite. What was relatively true is no longer absolutely credible. We see evil, yet believe in universal good; we see diversity, but believe in unity; we are surrounded by change and death, yet cling to the certainty of eternal stability and life.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## PROGRESS OF FREETHINKING IN BEDLINGTON.

SIR,—For some time past the pulpits of this place have rung the usual changes in refutation of infidelity, and doubters of every shade, from the Socinian to the Atheist, have been delivered over to Satan with as little remorse as a bailiff would serve a writ upon an unfortunate debtor. At last a champion for the faith appeared in the person of Mr. Wood, who, arrayed in all the armour of the elect, publicly proclaimed that he would drive infidelity from the place in twelve months.

Mr. Wood commenced lecturing on the evidences of Christianity, and invited the freethinkers to come and ask him questions, that the opportunity might be afforded him of removing their objections. One person, an able and well-informed man, but no public speaker, asked him some questions; and Mr. W., taking advantage of his opponent's inability to address a public audience, held up his ideas to ridicule, and boasted that he would demolish all infidels as easily as he had the one who had already questioned him. Mr. Wood then undertook to show that the Bible was in accordance with all scientific truth—especially with the teachings of geology and astronomy. Mr. Mill having been lecturing on these subjects in the neighbourhood, Mr. Wood stated that he would prove him insane. Mr. Mill accordingly attended, and having objected to many things advanced, especially the exposition of the first chapters of Genesis, Mr. Wood invited him to a discussion on the genuineness and authenticity of the whole Bible, and appointed that day fortnight for the commencement of the debate.

At the appointed time Mr. Wood gave a lecture. He commenced by stating that the Jews had three books, or rather classes of books—the Law, the Prophets, and the book of Hymns or Psalms. That Jesus had frequently cited passages from them, and referred to them as containing a revelation from God; and hence they had not only the authority of Moses and the prophets, but of Christ also. That Josephus and other authors had quoted from them, and given it as their opinion that the books were from God. That the Jews were not a credulous people, and could not have been imposed upon, and that they would suffer death rather than alter their sacred books. The agreement of the books one with another, and their remarkable preservation, was another proof of their divinity. That all the good of the present time had resulted from the Bible. Priestcraft and infidelity were falling, and would soon be forgotten. Mr. Wood concluded by saying that he had more charity for the Red Republicans (those social butchers, as he termed them, of France), than he had for the man who would take the Bible from us—and that he had the least charity of all for those who mangled and curtailed the word of God, taking one portion and rejecting another, just as it suited their own ideas.

Mr. Mill, in reply, said that he feared he should have but very little charity from his opponent, as he had sifted the Bible to the best of his ability, had rejected whatever appeared to him to be bad, but had never refused a good thought, no matter who had said it. His opponent had given them the arguments generally given for the genuineness of the Bible, he (Mr. M.) would furnish him with a reply. The authority of Jesus, Josephus, and others was first disposed of, and then the other arguments advanced. Mr. Wood attempted a reply without success. Mr. Mill rejoined with arguments of great variety and force, which compelled his opponent to admit that he was unable to reply.

Two other meetings took place, but Mr. Wood could never again be brought to debate, and finally gave up all further contest with the sceptics.

Z.

## MEANINGS, NEW AND OLD, OF THE TERM ATHEIST.

[DISCUSSING with a friend the other day the meanings, modern and ancient, of the term Atheist, induced the following note to be written by him subsequently. It may be of use in directing the inquiries of others.]

Dear Jacob,—I find you are both right and wrong in the matter of the word atheist. The Greeks have an adjective, *atheatos*, which means 'blind to,' 'not seeing.' I do not, however, find a substantive answering to our word atheist. But there is an adverb, *atheei*, which means 'without the aid of God;' the prefix *a* does mean 'not.' So far you are right. But you are wrong in your logic. You said we ought not to go back to the ancient meaning of words when the modern meaning was opposed to it. I assented. But, in this instance, the ancient meaning—that is, of *atheatos*—comes nearest to the word which I think you wish to apply to yourself, namely, that you are one 'blind to' or 'not seeing' a God. So that to employ the word in this sense would subject you to these misapprehensions you seek to avoid; as the herd do *not* apprehend by the term atheist a man 'not seeing' God, but a man who wilfully denies the existence of God from sinister motives, and who, in denying God, denies virtue, truth, honesty, justice, and all those noble qualities which go to make up a great and good man.

You want, therefore, either a new word or a new definition of the old word. If you adhere to the true etymological meaning, you will not be understood; if you accept the modern, which you will not, you will commit a great error. Choose, therefore, though the choice be difficult.

In my Latin lexicon, *irreligious* is the word given to define an atheist, which means 'ungodly,' 'irreligious,' 'undevout.' This, of course, involves a definition of irreligion, ungodliness, and opens up the question afresh.

Walker says—'Atheist, one who denies a God.' The meaning I should be disposed to give would be 'not a theist;' but this would not meet your case, for, though not a theist, you are not (see Walker's definition) an atheist.

There is another view of this word, and I fancy that is what you are driving at. Does not atheist, in reality, as applied by yourself to yourself, mean one who does not *believe* in a God? Is it not belief or disbelief which is in question here, not negation or assertion? But then you do neither. You do not say 'I believe in God,' neither do you say 'I do not believe in God;' you simply say 'I see no reason to believe in God. He *may* exist—I do not perceive that he does. Consequently, though I cannot be said to assert, neither do I deny, the existence of God.' You are one who might say *nescii deos*, but not *nego deos*, there being an important difference in the *verbs*—one implying a *want of knowledge* on the subject, the other expressing absolutely a knowledge that the gods are not.

I have just found *atheos*—said to be 'without God,' 'denying the Gods'—in general, 'ungodly, godless.'

Camden Town.

EUGENE.

['Jacob' thinks the course to be taken is to use the term Secularists as indicating general views, and accept the term Atheist at that point at which Ethics declines alliance with Theology; always, however, explaining the term Atheist to mean 'not seeing God' visually or inferentially—never suffering it to be taken (as Chalmers, Foster, and many represent it) for anti-theism, that is, *hating* God, *denying* God,' as 'hating' implies personal knowledge as the ground of dislike, and 'denying' implies infinite knowledge as the ground of disproof.—ED.]



PROGRESS AT THE PHILPOT STREET INSTITUTION,  
COMMERCIAL ROAD.

SIR,—I have been solicited by our friends here to report to the *Reasoner* the progress we have made, and are still making, in the cause of freethought. The Philpot Street Institution is a small one, but, through the exertions of our valuable friend, J. P. Adams, and the gentlemen who compose the committee, it is rendered as useful as any similar institution in the metropolis. Public discussions are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, which are very numerously attended. The proceedings here of late have much disturbed the tranquillity of the pious of the neighbourhood; in consequence of which the ministers of the surrounding chapels have been using their influence, and doing all in their power to close our place of meeting.

But, in spite of their efforts and intimidations, our landlord, in a spirit that puts Christian toleration to the blush, answered, when asked to refuse us the use of his hall—‘As I let my hall to Christians that they may preach against infidelity, I cannot do less than allow freethinkers an opportunity for reply.’

Finding we were not to be silenced in that manner, they resolved to try what the power of argument would do; so every night of discussion we have clergymen and others to oppose us, and long and animated are the debates. The other evening the Rev. Mr. Phillips, of Northampton, with whom you discussed some three years ago, paid us a visit. In the course of his address he informed us that infidels and free thinkers were ‘a set of mean, dishonest fellows,’ and that they knew it, but had not the honesty to confess it. The unanimous disapprobation of the audience showed the rev. gentleman that he enjoyed the opinion alone.

We had a discussion lately upon the subject, ‘What are the Prospects and Promises of Materialism?’ Several clergymen were present, and the debate was an interesting and instructive one. At the conclusion Dr. Brooks delivered an able speech, and argued with much force the superiority of the doctrine of materialism over spirituality, and said that his personal experience had taught him that it was from material, and not spiritual, things men were to look for wisdom and improvement. The discussions are conducted upon the principle, so often enforced in the *Reasoner*, of allowing a fair and impartial hearing to all, and conceding the same sincerity of intention to our opponents as we claim for ourselves.

We have on the committee well-tried workers in the cause of political and religious liberty, and with the co-operation of the members, we hope to extend our sphere of action, increase our numbers, and enlarge the institution, and, by a good staff of lecturers, organise an effective freethinking propagandism for this part of the town.

HENRY.

JEHOVAH DESTROYED BY HIS ATTRIBUTES.

SIR,—In considering the existence of Jehovah, we must do so relatively to his entire being; and if we find that any of those attributes which are necessarily ascribed to him to constitute him a God are incompatible with each other, or that the possession of one effectually precludes the possession of another, we shall be inevitably forced to the conclusion that a being with such powers and faculties does not, and cannot, exist. Theologians have invariably depicted God as an absolute being, possessing intelligence and omniscience; but it will appear, upon a mere glance, which appearance will be confirmed by protracted thinking, that as

an intelligent being must be a progressive being, it can neither be absolute nor omniscient. Intelligence includes the idea of comparison and induction; and we may, for the sake of argument, assume the existence of a being possessing unlimited knowledge, but as soon as an intelligent act—that of comparing and inferring—takes place in his mind it gives rise to a new idea, adds to his stock of knowledge, annihilates his omniscience, and proves him to be a progressive being. As, therefore, a progressive being cannot be an absolute being—for the idea of progression presupposes relation to time, circumstances, and conditions—it follows as a matter of course that an absolute, intelligent being does not, and cannot, exist.

Again, we may, for the sake of admitting his omniscience as it respects the future, assume the existence of an absolute being determined not to compare his ideas for the production of a new one, but from the position he would occupy at any period of his existence he would necessarily have an idea of the events transpiring at that time, and he could not recall the memory without a comparison taking place, and forcing his mind to an inference. To suppose, then, the existence of such a being determined not to compare ideas, we must also suppose him determined not to recall the memory of the past, an act which would at once destroy his omniscience as respects the infinite past, and also a part of his intelligence, for it is a law which holds true of mind, that unless it recalls the memory of events that have already transpired they are soon forgotten. But some may exclaim, 'the finite cannot grasp the infinite.' Admitted; but a law which holds true of a finite mind, must be infinitely more true of an infinite one—and, indeed, the very fact of never recalling the ideas of the past is proof positive of their being forgotten.

In a previous paragraph we have premised that an absolute being cannot be intelligent, for intelligence, as we have already observed, includes comparison and induction, and renders its possessor a progressive being. The distinguishing characteristic of an absolute being is, that he cannot be affected either by time, circumstances, or conditions; whereas a progressive being must be affected by them all to constitute him a progressive being. It is only by time, circumstances, and conditions acting upon an individual that he can pass from one state to another, either physically, mentally, or morally. This passing from stage to stage takes place in virtue of an individual's intelligence, and wherever we find intelligence we must, from its very nature, also find progression—a progression either in virtue and knowledge, or in ignorance and vice. As, therefore, a progressive being can never remain the same, and as an absolute being must always be 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' it follows most incontestibly that a progressive being can never be an absolute one.

We thus find, by a plain and unsophisticated course of reasoning, that although an intelligent being must be a progressive being, he cannot be omniscient, and that a progressive being cannot be absolute; it therefore follows that, as our idea of God is the representative of an absolute being possessing both intelligence and omniscience, we are necessarily forced to the conclusion that his existence is an impossibility.

Mile End.

SAMUEL POOLEY.

#### READING THE BIBLE A PENAL OFFENCE IN TUSCANY.

EXTRACT from the Register of the deliberations of the Council of the Prefecture of the Department of Florence. Sitting of the 16th of May, 1851:—

Whereas, It is proven that, on the evening of the 7th day of this present month, Fidèle Zetti, the Connt Pierre Guicciardini, Cæsar Magrini, Angiolo Guarducci,

Charles Solaini, Sabatino Borsiero, and Joseph Guerra, were seated round a table in the house of the said Fidèle; and

*Whereas*, It appears, from the confession of the accused themselves, that at the same moment the Count Guicciardini was reading and commenting upon a chapter of the Gospel of St. John, in the Italian translation attributed to Jean Diodati; and

*Whereas*, There are sufficient poofs that this reading and commentary had no other intent than to inspire sentiments and religious principles contrary to those of the Apostolical Roman Catholic faith;—

*Therefore*, In consideration of the second article of the decree of the 25th April, 1851, the Council adjudges imprisonment for six months, to the Count Guicciardini at Volterra, Cæsar Magrini at Montieri, Angiolo Guarducci at Guincarico, Fidèle Zetti at Orbitello, Charles Solaini at Cinquiana, Sabatino Borsiero at Rocca Strada, and Joseph Guerra at Piombino.

Corrected copy. For the Secretary.

A. LAMBUCHI, First Commissioner.

GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square.  
 —August 31st [7½], a lecture.—Sept. 3rd, [8½].  
 Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'The Respective Merits of Free Trade and Protection.'  
 Hall of Science, City Road.—(Undergoing improvements.)  
 National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Aug. 31st, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.  
 Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'  
 Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.  
 City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.  
 Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.  
 City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

— Abolition of Royalty .....	0 2
Life of Paine, by W. J. Linton .....	0 6
Portrait of Paine, engraved on Steel .....	1 0
The English Republic, edited by W. J. Linton. Nos. 1 to 7, each at .....	0 6
Byron's Vision of Judgment .....	0 2
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### Our Open Page.

WE observe by a prospectus, which has been issued under good auspices, that it is proposed to establish a 'People's Institute for Westminster and Pimlico,' to be devoted to the 'promotion of Secular Education and the furtherance of Democratic Progress.' Among the trustees we find the names of Mr. Charles Lushington, M.P., Mr. Lawrence Heyworth, M.P., and Mr. T. S. Duncombe, M.P. A committee has been formed, Mr. Vansittart Neale has accepted the treasurer'ship, and Mr. Edmond Stallwood has been appointed secretary. They propose to establish a People's Institute in the vicinity of the Westminster improvements, the proposed site being in Upper Tachbrook Street—a plot of ground admirably adapted for the purpose, and already in the possession of working men. It possesses a ninety-nine years' lease, on which the promoters propose to erect a Hall, with the necessary appurtenances, by means of one thousand shares at £1 each (transferable), payable by instalments of not less than three pence per week per share; any person to be at liberty to take up as many shares as he or she may think proper; but in order to ensure the Institute's continuance in the possession and interest of the industrial classes, no person (be their shares one or many) will have or exercise more than one vote in the direction of its affairs. Shares can be obtained, on application to the secretary, any day at Bridge Row Wharf, Pimlico.

In the *Kreuz Zeitung* of the 8th of July, the organ of the Prussian State Church, the following pithy bit occurs, very characteristic of the paper and the party it represents. The article from which it is extracted is entitled 'Democracy, Cholera, and the Potato Blight.' Thus it runs—'Death is the wages of sin. Every age has its peculiar sins and peculiar punishments. At present democratic principles have attacked the mind of the people, cholera their blood, and the potato blight their means of subsistence. We do not, however, want knowledge of these things—we want repentance. Let the people return to the living God, and he will have mercy upon them. Conversion can alone save us.'—The *Daily News*, commenting on this burst of piety, very correctly terms it 'hideous, brazen-faced hypocrisy—ruffian cant—swaggering, insolent Pharisaism.' And yet it contains the quintessence of Christianity.

The person who wrote to Mr. Holyoake in Newcastle, signing himself 'An Admirer,' must send his name and address before his communication can be even of private service.

Mr. Knowles's subscription for Mr. Zeredy's book will be handed to the editor of the *Leader*.

A German author has prepared translations of the chief passages in the 'History of the Last Trial by Jury for Atheism,' to be published in a new German work entitled 'Congenial Voices from England and France.'

Mr. Lawton informs us that 'On the 27th of July a general meeting of the Sheffield Branch of the Rational Society was held, at which a petition to Parliament on the subject of Harmony Hall, somewhat similar to that from the Central Board which appeared in your columns, was unanimously adopted. I sent it to our Member, Mr. Parker, for presentation, and he has informed me by letter that he duly presented the same.'

The word 'man,' to which a note is attached on page 208 in the last number, should have been printed *them*. As it stands the note is unintelligible.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## ADVENTURES IN WHITEHAVEN.

FREETHINKERS have said that the professions of Christianity are belied by its practices—that even when it utters the words of peace its spirit is the spirit of strife. Freethinkers have said that Christianity is incompatible with Liberty, incompatible with Progress, incompatible with Fraternity. ‘Calumniators on principle!’ cries the pious partisan. ‘False!’ shouts the gentle-souled student of the Sermon on the Mount. ‘Haters of every thing holy!’ exclaims the exact Preacher—‘the Christian, in whatever station, exemplifies and promotes unity among men: he is ever forward to promote good offices and good works.’ A short narrative of the events in Whitehaven on the occasion of my recent visit there may throw useful light on these professions.

Some years ago, when mere enthusiasm was supposed sufficient for the advocacy of a cause, a Social Missionary went down to this town and created a somewhat premature astonishment by issuing a placard giving the inhabitants the interesting information that the Devil and Socialism were in Whitehaven. The good people were in no want of this assurance, as they were already of opinion that the Devil was the official propagator of that system; and when they were told it upon the authority of one of our own placards, they resolved to treat the matter in a Christian spirit, and the magistrates of the town seconding their laudable endeavours, windows were broken, lives endangered; and the natural penalty of the ‘sensational’ policy, a panic, seized those who acquiesced in it, and fear and utter inaction have been the fruits.

On the occasion referred to, the *Zumberland Pacquet* applauded ‘the display of feeling on the part of the populace, so creditable to their love of religion, morality, and social order.’ For an entire week this ‘creditable’ display continued—fire was set in a dangerous manner to the premises of one of the friends. And many were the letters addressed to the newspapers by persons who had to repudiate Social views in order to exempt themselves from the violence of the mob. This was a triumph of the enemy which of all others I can last forget and forgive.

The panic occasioned by these outrages lasted till the period of my visit. Indeed no one had ventured into the town since the Riots as the advocate of Rationalistic opinion. A mob who had once tasted the pleasure of riot, encouraged by the authorities, do not soon relinquish such a luxury. And the present temper of the magistracy was shown in the decision on Hughan’s case, whose assailant they justified. Upon learning this I offered to go down there and lecture upon that unusual magisterial proceeding, but my offer was declined more on the ground of the danger and the cost. Finding myself soon after likely to be northwards I renewed my offer on terms within available means. A friend who took an active part in the arrangement (of whom I shall have more to communicate) burst a blood vessel and died instantaneously a week before my arrival. The animosity

shown to the living was not spared the dead, and the burial service was refused to Lennon's remains. To himself, to his friends, who shared his opinions, this was of no consequence, but the spirit of it was an outrage to his wife and family. On this occurrence excitement was renewed, and coarse and cruel things were said by the religious. The populace who throng the Bulwarks, remembering the licence granted them before by the magistrates, and which had to be censured by Sir James Graham, the Secretary of State at the time, indicated their intention of renewing the old scenes at my lectures—a distinction which I certainly did not covet. On arriving in the town on the 7th instant, I found that everybody who approached me had visible in his countenance or in his speech the most dismal apprehensions. Of the reality of some unusual dread I was assured, by the fact that the women shared it. Hitherto I had found them under such circumstances to be the last to utter a word of discouragement in danger, but here they diffused panic around them. The men had much to contend against in this way. Some houses I was assured had been like houses of mourning ever since my offer to come to Whitehaven had been accepted—and towards Tuesday night women who had addressed me courteously on previous days, no longer spoke or looked at me, and I purposely avoided the houses of all I knew, to whom I seemed some evil genius. Indeed I was sorry for them. So pale and anxious was the aspect they wore that there was no mistaking their terror. The ignorant and desperate Irish population were dreaded, as their prejudices were known to be above the reach of reason, and a colliery population (of Lord Lonsdale's, if I remember rightly) were no less dreaded. It was in vain that I urged that the charges for admission (3d. to the Gallery, 6d. to the Pit, and 1s. to the Boxes) would keep *them* away. The answer was they would force the door. If they do, I rejoined, they cannot reach the stage to interrupt the Lecture. 'But they say they will come armed with stones to throw them down on the lecturer, the chairman, and whoever is on the stage,' was the gratifying information I received. Thinking that so much ingenuity ought not to lack appropriate exercise, I arranged to be my own chairman, that the fortunate objects of their aim being diminished to unity, it might be more to their credit if they hit it. Many stories repeated to me of the strength, ferocity, and unmanliness of our expected assailants confirmed these reports of their intentions. Corroborations too came from more imposing quarters than rumour. The proprietor of the Theatre, departing from the course he had pursued in some recent lettings of the place, wrote to demand previous payment, 'as he had been given to understand there was likely to be a disturbance.' 'Suppose we should be prevented using the place the second night, would you demand payment for both?' 'Certainly,' was the answer, 'and we demand payment for both now before entered upon.' Payment was of course made. When in Newcastle-on-Tyne a party of religious Whitehaven people, accidentally meeting at Johnson's Hotel, assured me that I should not be heard in their town, and that it was of no use that I went. One gentleman present came to me privately and said 'do not let these persons alarm you.' 'Certainly,' I said, 'they will not deter me. Were I to be deterred by these kind of alarmists I should never go anywhere.' But as they were respectable men in congregational connection, and not of the mob, the ramification of opposition seemed to pervade all classes. One man stepped into the shop of a respectable tradesman in the town of Whitehaven after I reached the town, and said that the Theatre would be pulled down that night, the night of the first lecture. At the last hour things began to wear an agreeable aspect. A piece of news arrived, namely, that the sergeant of police had been heard saying

that 'there would be blood and slaughter in the Theatre that night, and he should order his men to keep out of the way, as they were not going to get their heads broken.' I was behind the scenes when this pleasant bit of intelligence was brought in. It was certainly a great comfort to those who paid police rates to hear of this public spirited speech. Those who relied on the police for the preservation of the peace of the town, and the protection of strangers in it, were delighted at the cheering prospect thus held out of assistance. It would be fine times with the disorderly and the anarchists if that discriminating sergeant were Commissioner of Police for the metropolis. Colonel Mayne ought not to allow such

A gem to blush unseen,  
And waste his sweetness on Whitehaven air.

However, in justice to the police corps, let me say that this sergeant's superior showed a somewhat different spirit. The superintendent of police was waited upon at my request, by a respectable inhabitant, and a request made for two policemen to be placed at the doors. He said two would be on duty on that beat, and pass the doors every five minutes, and he himself would look in as often as his duties allowed. Did I feel afraid? asked some friends. I answered, 'Perhaps I should, but as my engagement was to Lecture and not to fear, I thought I was excluded from the privilege of feeling apprehension.' I maintained that there never could be a quarrel unless there were two parties to it, and that I was not going to be one. My experience has shown me that men of rudest natures can never break out into outrage at once—they wait for some pretext or provocation, and if you do not afford this they must go home disappointed. Upon this I relied. With respect to reports I advised my friends not to listen to them, to treat them with incredulity, and preserve a quiet but determined bearing. For every one to go and tell every one that an attack was expected, was to make a disturbance inevitable. We should have been obliged to get up a disturbance ourselves to prevent the public suffering from disappointment.

It has been the case that some of our friends have spoken at the Bulwarks, where the idle and disorderly assemble in too great a proportion for any good to be done, or even peace preserved. Thus an unwise connection is established between us and the mob. Seeing the uncultivated and vulgar natures of the opponents with which I had to deal, I took the method of combating them through their own prejudices. A friend in Newcastle-on-Tyne, of some insight in these matters, had ordered me a white silk hat. Its newest gloss of unworn brightness was upon it. I put this on, and also a new coat, which my itinerant wardrobe happened fortunately to afford, and immediately sallied out alone to inspect the camps of the enemy, and to show myself to the foe. I knew that there is a divinity doth hedge a gentleman as well as a king, and that appearance would find a response where principle would find none. Nor was I deceived. The local mobs made way for me, twenty yards before I approached them, and those who would have knocked me down had I worn a 'shocking bad hat,' stepped involuntarily out of the way. They respected my attire who would have had no mercy on myself or my views. As I was respectable they thought I might have friends, that it might not prove so safe to assault me. A 'seedy' dress would have ruined me.

An hour before the time of commencing the first lecture I was at the Theatre—saw all the lights ready and the doors all manned (by a group of able friends just out of sight), so that no hiatus could occur which might give the enemy an advantage. Strong men, who ought to have been present at the lecture, stayed away through fear. Others approached our encampment cautiously, reconnoitring the

foe from the angles of Irish Street, and only made advances when all seemed quiet. But a sufficient body of friends, whose affections on this occasion I tested by the strength of their arms, came forward bravely and manned the doors, and diffused themselves over the Theatre in those parts where the Christians were thickest, and held themselves ready either to listen to the lecture or help a refractory neighbour into the street as the case might require. Wherever two or three Christians were gathered together, there were we in the midst of them. I owed my safety to the address and courage of my friends in this way. As soon as I had seen the posts occupied, I carefully examined the resources of the Theatre for fortification, defence, or retreat, and I am now in a condition to afford to any Company of Players, who may have an eye to Thespian honours in Whitehaven, the most accurate information as to the fittings of the Green-room, the portability of the scenes, and the state of the bolts on the doors or *through* the doors, with a ground plan of the premises around. The precautions I took would have been superfluous in a Christian. The true believer, having a mansion in his Father's house, sees in death but an agreeable change of residence—but to others not so certain as to a celestial estate, Manslaughter amounts to an entire disinheritance, and therefore they decline that casualty when obtruded on them prematurely.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

[To be completed next week.]

#### BROTHER DICK FULFILLETH A REVELATION.

OUR enthusiastic 'Brother Dick' desires us to make known the following address from his pen:—

Hottentots, French, Esquimaux, British, New Zealanders, Germans, Turks, and Indians, are all brothers. Man is wholly fallen. What is the cause of his fall? Is it not carnality? What is the cause of carnality? And the remedy? Carnal food makes man carnal? The word carnal comes from the Latin word *caro, carnis*—flesh. Is it then not reasonable to believe that flesh-food makes a man fleshly or carnal? Is a carnal man a godly man? Is he fit to appear for final judgment? Did God make any life to be sacrificed? How long are we to forget that Jesus was nailed to the cross on Calvary! He trampled upon carnality, and died pure and holy. Heathen and Christian are brothers, and can understand this. And may God have mercy on us all! DO WE BELIEVE IN GOD?

Are we not steeped in shame? Now is the time to seek the cause thereof, and having got that, let us rid ourselves of all that is bad. Why not live in continual sunshine? The cause of all is self—at the heart. Carnality—a word many dislike to hear; why? because, like the writer, they have suffered from that fearful vice. The cause of carnality is known to all. Flesh-food makes man fleshly; he thereby is not whole; he dies before his time. No man can stop half-way in the search of Truth—he must go on. Relaxation is bad—the reaction must be felt afterwards. How then arrive at the Truth? Get rid of carnality, and the battle is gained. Can we forget how nobly Christ fought and died? Flesh makes us fleshly. May God soon make us pure and holy. Great father have mercy on us! Now is the appointed time; now is the day of salvation! The time is come when the world must fall down and confess its faults before God!

Meeting every Sunday, at 11 a.m., at 67, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury. Brother C. M. Dick will speak. The Revelations must be fulfilled. [Of course they must.—Ed.]



### Examination of the Press.

SKETCHES IN SCOTLAND, BY THOMAS COOPER.—From communications of Mr. Cooper, in the *Leader* and *Northern Star*, entitled 'Notes of Travel and Talk;' we take the following extracts from his Scottish experiences:—We landed at Ardrissan by eight in the evening (leaving Belfast at one in the afternoon of Saturday), and in less than two hours I was in the streets of Glasgow, and was welcomed by the hospitality of my friend Mr. Clarke, a Unitarian minister. I had never been in Scotland before; and though I had heard much of the beauty of Edinburgh, no one had ever praised the appearance of Glasgow in my hearing. I therefore saw its Argyle Street, its Exchange, and its squares and streets to the west with the utmost surprise. I do not hesitate to say that the western part of Glasgow is more stately and better built than any town in England except London. It is true that the contrast between the wynds of the old town, and these superb parts of the new, is very notable; but the contrasts in London are fully as remarkable. The first entire day I spent in Scotland being a rainy Sunday, all who are well acquainted with the country will have some guess of my misery, especially as I had no talking duty to attend to. What sombre looks—what dismal clanking of the single bells in the churches—what a dreary closing of every shop and house—what long solemn drawling in most lugubrious minors, under the name of 'psalm tunes,' as you pass the kirks—what troops of people all wending solemnly to the kirk, and looking neither to the right hand nor to the left! I wandered hither and thither, gazing at the buildings, till I was wet and faint (for I never can control my curiosity when I enter a fresh city)—and I sought a place of entertainment, but none could I find open: nothing to be had either to eat or drink—it was—awful word in Scotland—'the Sabbath!' I began to feel as bitter as the Scotch Sabbath itself, and looked about for a cab; but I had to plod my dreary way down many a street before I found one, and then away I went, and esconced myself among my friend Clarke's books. I was in and out of Glasgow for more than three weeks, passing four times to talk at Paisley, and sundry other times to talk at Barrhead, Kilbarchan, and Campsie. In Glasgow itself I addressed audiences five times in the Unitarian chapel, and once in the Lyceum, Nelson Street. I soon found the intellectual atmosphere to be very different from that of Belfast. It was no longer difficult to make oneself understood, or touch the chord of sympathy; but I was evidently talking to a critical people. I had the same impression all the way through Scotland; and everywhere I was surrounded by working men who gave powerful indications of mind—though I did not think every individual I met free from wrongheadedness, nor, above all, conceit. Indeed there is too much vain talk about 'our Scotch education,' and a most ungracious and discourteous undervaluing of the mental training of the English. Of course this is to be found among those Scotchmen who have never been out of Scotland. It is time all these foolish prejudices were laid aside. Scotchmen ought to know that throughout the whole length and breadth of England working men are as eager for education and in as great numbers, too, as the working men to be found anywhere north of the Tweed. But their prejudice is not confined to the notion of their superior education. The majority of the Scotch—ay, even they who are professed free-thinkers—evinced such a tenderness respecting their 'Sabbath,' that if you happen to hum a line of a song or to whistle on the Sunday, they look as if they were about to swoon. You tell them that you regard their notion of the Sunday as absurdly tyrannous, and creative of hypocrites. They do not deny it; but they

answer with a stolid solemnity that provokes your mirth, 'Ay, but it is our Scottish Sabbath!'—and there they think the conversation ought to end. One of the most vinegar instances of Sabbatarianism that I met in Scotland, was at Paisley. The friend who had been commissioned to invite me to talk there directed me to a Temperance Hotel. On the Sunday, having spent the forenoon in writing letters in my sleeping room (not being allowed to write them elsewhere), I went down stairs, towards two o'clock, and said cheerfully, 'Now, landlord, what have you got for dinner?' The man's face became three inches longer! 'Dinner, sir,' he answered, 'do you not ken it's the Sabbath?' The words, and the man's look, were so strange, that I asked him, in my perplexity, what he said, although I had heard him plainly enough. He repeated his question, and I could not help, somehow or other, appealing to his satanic majesty whether such a question was not strange. 'What the d——,' said I, 'has the Sabbath to do with my dinner? Do you think an Englishman is to go without his dinner, because it is what *you* call *the Sabbath*?' He looked unutterable things, but, without saying more, went into the kitchen, and began conversing in a low tone with the landlady. Very soon he beckoned me, and when I had rejoined him he said in a mysterious tone, 'Ye ken if ye'll stay till the people are gone to the kirk I'll get ye a steak!' I was in danger of laughing in his face, though he looked inexpressibly serious. When his company (who had been sitting silently in various rooms, discussing biscuits, tracts, and teetotal drinks) had disappeared, the steak was brought up. I asked wag-gishly, if he could not give me a drop of porter. 'Nay, nay,' he replied very firmly, 'nae porter.' The man was truer to his teetotalism than to his sour Sabbatarianism, after all! His conscience was bound by appearances in one case, and it led to hypocrisy. In the other it was guided by conviction, and he preserved his truth. Of course I did not trouble him with my company again. The following Sunday when I had to be at Paisley again, I went to the principal inn, and there dinner was served up, and all things went on as they do in any English hotel. The lesson was not lost upon me. I took care never to be sornly circumstanced again while in Scotland. It is this gloomy, slavish, soul-grinding doctrine and practice of Sabbatarianism, which raises one's combativeness perpetually in Scotland. As for a little conceit of their 'education,' why I suppose we must excuse it. Englishmen have also their conceit; and so 'let that pass.' The sturdy independence of some, and the natural cheerfulness of the many, among the Scotch, makes one wonder that this irksome bondage is borne so long. The rise of the 'Free Kirk,' too, they say, has tightened the general bondage—for the new sect vies with the old in setting the example of strictness. I heard that some parties had been summoned before the authorities in Arbroath, and *fined* for *walking out* on the Sunday! Perhaps it is to be desired that such instances should increase—even till they attempt to nail up people's doors and windows on the Sunday. May the Scotch have enough of it, say I—*till they end it!*

EXETER HALL.—This fine building, situated in the Strand, at the Surrey foot of Blackfriars Bridge, was founded by Nell Gwynne, in 1672, as an asylum for Mad Missionaries, but when the Castlemaine party came into power it was turned into a play-house and continued so for many years.....During May certain days are set apart for the exhibition of the Howling Dervishes, and crowds are attracted by their performance. At present there are suppers and singing every night after the theatres. The hall may be hired for Bals Masqués, Poses Plastiques, and similar diversions by application to the secretary.—*The Month*, by Albert Smith.

### Jesus, and the Moral Aspects of Christianity.

BY W. J. B.

MATTHEW tells us, in his 4th chapter, that 'From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' We can see nothing remarkable in this declaration; we think it very much wanting in plainness. He does not tell his hearers what they were to repent of; he tells them why they are to repent—because 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' He here deals in equivocation or error. If that memorable enigma, the 'kingdom of heaven,' were to stand for any event which might happen, it was an equivocation; if it was meant as it was taken, that some glorious time was to succeed for the Jews—or, in reality, that heaven was to come down upon earth—it was a mistake, which has been corroborated by more than eighteen hundred years of disappointment.

How are we to interpret repentance? We can only interpret it by what immediately follows—by the method pursued with the first converts. Peter and Andrew, brothers, were fishing; Jesus tells them to give up fishing. James and John were mending their nets with their father: Jesus called them, and they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. Now we might call this a repentance of good works. If this kind of thing was re-enacted in our day, men would say it would be more moral for the first pair to have stuck to their fishing, instead of being seduced by the expectation held out of catching men. We think the second pair should have continued mending their nets, particularly as it appears they had a father to support. They did not repent of their filial duty, and they would be found at their post of duty when the kingdom of heaven came, whether in the shape of heaven coming to earth or their going in their death to heaven. We do not see the value of faith in this instance. Peter was actually catching fish, which employ-

ment he leaves at the idea of catching men, without even asking what is meant by catching men. It clearly appeared that *he* was easily caught.

Jesus seems, in many respects, to have overlooked the definiteness of conduct and speech which it became him as a moralist to enforce by his own example. From his miscellaneous bearing, it would appear that no one else was to show anger or call names, but he was privileged to give names to things and shower abuse on his brethren. Others were to bless their enemies, and to do good to those who did them ill; but he was to revenge himself, and confer eternity of punishment on those who spoke against or did not believe in him. We ask whether his was not a religion of fear, not of love, and therefore immoral? Is not anger immoral? and fearing to give offence is the feeling of slaves towards a tyrant.

One evangelist tells us a story of what happened on the occasion of his crucifixion, which brings to mind a striking peculiarity of Jesus. According to Luke, the two thieves debated the divinity of Christ. The ruling passion strong in death, Jesus caught at a convert, and promised him that day he should be with him in Paradise. Was this the only barren result of revelation, and his crucifixion on the cross, and his stay on earth, that he brought home a friend—and such a friend—the first fruits of preaching offered by the son to the father? Now what we wanted was an example of his moral doctrine, proof whereby we might believe in the efficacy of it. Jesus let this last opportunity pass as before; one was to be saved because he believed in him, the other was to be damned because he did not.

But we have not so much to do with this new religion as with the moral aspect of it. Here was an occasion to bless his enemies and forgive sinners!

He should have said, 'Though the one has had grace to believe without seeing, yet the other is equally saved by my death. I came to bless my enemies, and not curse them; I came to return good for evil, even good for ignorance, error, or incredulity. As I have taught that my father in heaven treats alike the good and the bad, as the father on earth behaved to his prodigal son, so shall I be glad to see my enemy in Paradise as well as my friend. Did not I say "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do?" should I not therefore forgive him who cannot know what he does?'

We would give ministers of the Gospel this piece of advice—to follow what they are fond of styling the practical of the morality of the Gospel. We would advise them to study what can be done in conversion by distributing the loaves and the fishes after the manner of Christ. Though they cannot work miracles, yet they have plenty to give away. They act too much the part of Dives, and the people do not even see the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table; much less are many thousands fed at their hands from the loaves and fishes they are able to collect. We would advise them to turn the sacrament into a real celebration, as seems to have been its purport—a supper of remembrance. As far as the poor are concerned, there would be some sense in saying 'This is true Christianity, which, except a man believe, he cannot be saved;' for who can be saved in time without subsistence?

Many of the remarks of Jesus call for the most unqualified exercise of faith to credit them. The cases are similar to that of the Mormon who said, what was the use of his walking over the Mississippi, when his people believed that he could do it? Under such circumstances their faith was much more to their credit than if he did it. They could believe no more if they saw him walk on the water. In the same manner we need discipline on being told by Christ that the penitent thief should be with him that day in Paradise, when he, we are told by the church, had to descend into Hell at the same time. But to dwell chiefly on moral aspects, and moral inconclusiveness. Considering what

power of working miracles Christ possessed, what implicit trust he inculcated in the Providence of the falling sparrows, it was curious that the son of man had not where to lay his head. Had that father who had provided holes for foxes and nests for birds, forgotten beds for his children, for whom he was to provide meat and drink so abundantly? A case warranting distrust was that where we find that the Fulfiller of the Scriptures took refuge for the night on board a ship, and a storm arose which woke the crew from their sleep. There is a species of immorality in all this inconclusiveness on a matter of so much moment in a prudential point of view. Again, when Jesus tells the son to follow him, who should have buried his father, the thing is open to important misconception, and seems a violation of the command of undoubted excellence—'honour thy father and mother.' When the devils said, 'why do you come to torment us before our time?' it seems as if his mission were to torment. It is a wonder people can sit down and hear such an account read, Sunday after Sunday, and call Christ the sinless man.

The inhabitants in one district did not wish to see any more miracles performed, and with a forbearance which he preached but did not practice, they respectfully begged he would depart out of their coast. In the instructions he gave, when he sent forth the twelve, he might teach them to be wise, but he certainly did not to be harmless. They were prepared to bite as serpents, and we may believe it from subsequent results, if you did not take warning and get out of their way. Their serpent wisdom was indeed to be but intellectual—they were to be as harmless as doves. But men whose wisdom is modelled on the serpent's, find curious and questionable modes of harmlessness in the development and maintenance of their spiritual power. He told them they need not provide anything, they were worthy of their meat. They were to live on any persons they liked, but if such persons would not receive them, it would be more tolerable for Sodomites than for them in the day of judgment. We think this was very politic, and easily accounted for their taking up the profession—but we ask if it were moral in Jesus? They should have blessed

those who would not receive them. Fancy every tramp saying he came to preach the kingdom of heaven to us, and therefore he must have board and lodging—should we refuse it, consigning us to hell fire!

This was a sort of ordination sermon to the apostles, without any practical word of peace in it. We know what effect it has had on those who have enjoyed the privileges of apostolical succession. We would ask if these were the glad tidings to preach to all men? Besides, the instructions were as contradictory as any of those delivered by Charles James, Bishop of London. They were to beware of men, yet they were not to care for them. They were to be scourged and put to death; yet, before they had gone over the cities of Israel, he was to come—meaning, of course, that his kingdom was to be established. He informed them they were to cause the brother to deliver up the brother to death, the father the child, and the children to put their parents to death. And they were to be hated of all men. They were quite mistaken, he said, if they thought he had come to send peace on the earth. They thought, as some people think now, he meant what he said in the sermon on the mount. Yet what can we make of that sad and too memorable passage? 'Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.' There is good reason to distrust all doctrine, by whomsoever preached, that justifies this sort of heralding.

Jesus, from comparatively very insufficient reasons, and before he began to explain why, addresses Scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers in the harshest language. We ask if they preached any such doctrine as Jesus did? Did they say they came to bring a sword into the world, or preach doctrines that might destroy all social and family relations? Their political character was the pre-

servation of peace at any price, and some unity in religion and among the people. Christians talk of their feelings; had not the Jews—the Pharisees, Sadducees, lawyers, Scribes, &c.—feelings? Was it not a flagrant injury to their feelings to be told the mission of one who must seem to them as an adventurer was to introduce internecine division into the nation, and possibly endanger the purest and holiest feelings of the family, which had hitherto, in the estimation of the world, constituted the cement of morality and society? Was it pleasant to be told, not only the above, but that their city and nation would be destroyed, and eternal burnings were reserved for them, who in his disordered imagination he spoke of so opprobriously because they did not believe in him? Was it not insult enough to ask them to believe in him, who proclaimed what in their estimation were immoral doctrines? But, allowing them strong religious feelings as well as Christians—and nobody denies but they had—was it not insulting them in the tenderest point to ask them to give up their God, whom they thought superhuman, and to worship a man, the son of a carpenter, and have their sins forgiven by fishermen? Not only their history and their customs were violated by such pretensions in Jesus, but their laws were infringed by his doctrines and his miracles. Do not these constitute what is called the feelings of persons? Are they not shaped by habit, by history, ancestry, and by legislation? Not only did Jesus delight in what must seem to his respectable hearers as abuse, but he took pleasure in confounding the Jews, and acting counter to their prejudices. Such were most of his answers, so contrived that the Jewish inquirers should injure themselves either with the Romans or the populace. Of the like description, and worse in regard to their religious scruples, was his telling them they should drink his blood, when he must have known that they were forbidden by their law to taste of the blood of animals, much less human blood. As a natural consequence, many left him at such sayings.

'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save.' This was Jesus's answer to his disciples

for proposing to call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village which had refused to receive him. We think the disciples reasoned justly from the Old Testament and what Jesus had told them of himself. If God, by his angels, had before brought down such punishment on a rebellious city, why could not Jesus do the same, who said he had the same power, and threatened much worse consequences for much slighter offences against his will? It is evident how they took his sayings and teachings, and that he had misled them. The ignorance with which he charged them was his rhetorical fault. It is quite evident how his disciples construed his power and intentions, and even after he was dead saw it in that light. Peter, ready with the sword during his life, after it struck a man dead for a very venial offence. It is the only instance recorded, but shows what manner of spirit they were of, which manner of spirit they persisted in thinking was Jesus's. They were the best judges; and if they received his teachings and sayings in a wrong spirit, the danger of them is clearly proved to us. It is nothing to say *he* would not do it. Any such modern Messiah we should declare a mischievous teacher, one that could not inspire his own disciples with a right spirit.

Whately says Jesus's instructions to his disciples when he sent them forth, that those should burn who did not receive them, has been the great argument for persecution ever since. Christians have reasoned, Better disbelievers should endure burning at once than for ever, or a few be burned as an example,

than a great many be burned for ever—or better be extirpated, that they be no more, and only those left who will receive us and be saved.

Why did not one so kind and gentle, as Jesus is by some painted, at once put the truth of Christianity beyond all doubt or rejection by evidence of that universal character which *commands* the adherence of men, and so save mankind from local persecution and future judgment? All we can say is that the councils of God ordered it otherwise. But this is to remove the question beyond the province of human reason entirely, and to give up the proper moral and human defence of Christ's system.

We can sympathise with John the Baptist, who, in prison, doubted the authenticity of Jesus's mission from heaven. He doubted when he heard of his works. The works did not seem to him sufficient, or were of that character that they might have as well belonged to a false prophet as a true. It was Christ's want of success which probably struck John, and that sort of success which John might have expected would have delivered him from prison. But the promised kingdom never came, and the Baptist lost his head before he had to pass an opinion on Jesus's kingdom ending in his crucifixion. When Jesus sent to say that he raised up the dead, we think the Baptist's head had a prior claim to have been put upon its shoulders. But Jesus could never exert his power by a more palpable, adroit, politic, or just act than by the vindication of his pretension and defence of his decapitated forerunner.

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

### PAGANISM'S NEW FACE.

[AFTER Mr. Holyoake's second lecture in Edinburgh, on 'Catholicism the Type of the Churches around us,' he received the following letter. We shall be glad to receive from Valerius his proposed Tract.]

Sir,—In your lecture yesterday evening, you gave, I think, as *the* reason for the first success of Christianity, the conviction impressed by its first apostles, and entertained by the Pagans to whom they preached it, that it (Christianity) was more *reasonable* than the older religious systems it was advanced to supplant.

Now, although such a statement is no doubt in a general sense quite true, and though it suits very well the tenor of your excellent lecture of yesterday evening, yet you ought to be aware that the true reason for the success and spread of Christianity is to be found in its *origin*, and that its origin is clearly to be traced to *Paganism*. In short, if we examine into the matter, we shall find that Christianity is just Paganism with a new face.

As to *time*, the origin of Christianity is just so far posterior to the fall of the Roman empire as we should expect it to be on the supposition that Christianity was the same religion (*viz.*, Paganism) revived under entirely new political and sacerdotal auspices. As to *place*, the origin of Christianity is not to be searched for in Judea, as the abounding geographical and other errors in the New Testament of themselves almost prove; but in Alexandria, where a fresh school of philosophy sprang from the ashes of the Roman and Grecian systems of philosophy and religion.

The *Therapeutin* monks (the *Essenes*), who, before any such thing or system as Christianity had an embodiment as Christianity, certainly did exist as a body of scholastic religionists; and they were, beyond doubt, the authors of all our New Testament epistles except that of John, which, there is good evidence to show, was written long subsequent to the establishment of what we call Christianity. The probabilities are greatly in favour of the belief, that under the personification of Jesus Christ these Essenes embodied a metaphysical doctrine, or else an astronomical idea. At all events, it is quite clear, and admitted I believe by at least one continental biblical expositor, that *no Jew* originated the story of Jesus Christ.

The points to which I have adverted are of great importance, and, as it seems to me, cut at the root of Christianity altogether. The serious fact once proved—and there are, if not *ample*, at least very formidable evidences in its favour—that the story of Jesus Christ is a myth of the Alexandrian school of philosophy, the whole of the miracles and prophecies fall to the ground at once, and a challenge of historical criticism is presented to the evidencists of Christianity.

Minds are, indeed, so differently constituted that it may not seem so to you. You may conceive that to lop off the branches is a more hopeful effort than to aim at the giant roots of that tremendous upas tree whose shadow darkens Chritendom. And in one sense you are very right. To a popular assembly it is undoubtedly better to lecture as you do well lecture.

But, to a certain class of minds, the point of view I have indicated is that from which Christianity ought perhaps to be attacked. In your paper it has *sometimes* been so attacked, and this I hope may be repeated.

For my own part, I shall be happy, if it suits your editorial arrangements, to write an article on the origin of Christianity, in which I shall endeavour to show that it (Christianity) is Paganism revived under new auspices. The article might be embodied in one of your *Reasoner* tracts, or otherwise; but I am not anxious to displace any other writer in your excellent paper, and I suppose you have by you more articles than you can insert.

I enclose my card with my present address (after the 15th of Sept. it will be different); but I think it worth while to tell you, that I am one of a too numerous class of young professional men whose prospects in life depend, more or less, on their assumed allegiance to the dogmas of the day, and who dare not publish their true opinions, at least with their names attached to them. Were you not right in saying, as you did last evening, that the Christian system is essentially persecuting in its spirit?

Edinburgh, Aug. 20, 1851.

VALERIUS.

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### CHARLES GEORGE HARDING.

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SIR,—Will you permit me to say a word for our departed mutual friend, Charles George Harding? An earnest soldier of Democracy, brave, intelligent, disinterested, and devoted, he was, as you know well, ever ready with his purse, his pen, and his time to work in that good cause in whose ultimate triumph he so firmly believed. In 1847, alone and unaided, he set on foot the *Republican*, a journal in which will be found great earnestness, great candour, true chivalry, and a more than ordinary intelligence. Essentially a man of the people, Charles Harding wrote for the people, uttering their then thoughts and feelings in their own language. Gentle, graceful, affectionate, yet strong and firm, possessed of unflinching good temper and unwearied zeal, he passed through life a useful servant and a sterling ornament of our party. With a mind free from all superstition, without orthodox beliefs of any kind, Republican in politics and Rationalist in religion, yet full of belief in the great truths of nature, full of reverence of the great men and great thoughts of humanity, he lived and died (alas! too young) an honourable man and a noble citizen. His was one of those happily balanced minds which never fret at difficulties, but work on, ever steadfast and ever believing. His was one of those genial hearts which see more of gladness in human life than sorrow, without selfishly ignoring that sorrow, sympathising, kindly, generous, true. Where work was to be done, there in the midst of it was Charles Harding; where sympathy was needed, from the fountains of his warm heart it sprang up clear and fresh and abounding.

But, alas! the seeds of that fatal disease which robbed us of Robert Nicoll were implanted in his system; and on the 22nd, only twenty-six years old, after great suffering, gently and uncomplainingly borne, he died true to his early and cherished convictions, and firm in his faith in our great cause. I know you will mourn with me the loss of one who would have fought so manfully in the coming strife; and over his grave drop the tear of sincere but unavailing regret; and in your heart, as I in mine, as all his friends will in theirs, inscribe his name with those of the true and good, whose memories we hold in honour and remember with affection, and whose example helps to sustain us in the arduous path we pursue.

August 26, 1851.

GEORGE HOOPER.



## INTERESTING STATE OF SHEFFIELD.

THE following communication, entitled 'Evangelicalism in its Results,' we take from the *Morning Chronicle*. Our Sheffield friends would render a very different account of the cause of the scepticism stated:—

Sir,—The struggle between High Church and Low Church appears now to be deepening in intensity, as though each party had hope of being able to expel the other. Up to this time the conflict has been maintained chiefly upon theological grounds, and the combatants have been almost exclusively from among the ranks of the clergy, the laity being content to be well-nigh silent spectators. The question, however, it appears to me, has also a social aspect, which should not be overlooked. A remarkable illustration of what I mean has just been afforded at Sheffield, to which I propose now to direct the attention of your readers. It has been the fortune of that town to be for many years under the control of evangelical influence, to a greater extent, perhaps, than any other place of the same size in the kingdom. Dr. Sutton, who has died within the last few months, was vicar for forty-six years, and under him the evangelical system, with all its appliances of missionary meetings, and ladies' committees, Dorcas, district-visiting, soup, child-bed societies, &c., &c., had full swing. From end to end of the town the clergy of this school had it their own way. Among the twenty-four or twenty-five churches of Sheffield and its suburbs, about one half were appointed directly, and the other half virtually, by the vicar. And what has been the result of this undisturbed sway of evangelicalism through so long a period? Contentment its advocates would surely expect, and the supremacy of practical religion. Very different is the answer furnished by the course of events. During the simulated fever of the last few months, which in its theological character was simply a combination of the Low Church party with infidelity, to destroy the personal opponents of the former, Sheffield has been vigorously protesting against the regimen to which it has been subjected. The whole intelligence of the place is united in favour of Mr. Trevor, a chaplain whom the late Dr. Sutton had been striving to keep out on the charge of Tractarian tendencies, and who is now fighting his battle in the courts of law.

And while this is the condition of the more educated classes, that of the poorer classes is what all of every religion must deplore. In the workhouse at Sheffield there are now nearly 2,000 inmates, of whose spiritual condition the following is the summary account furnished by the undeniable evidence of their own testimony:—1407 (that is, three-fourths of the whole) have 'declined to acknowledge themselves of any religious persuasion,\* and thirteen have openly avowed that they are of none.' [Letter of the Secretary of the Poor Law Commission.]

Such, sir, is the result of nearly half a century of evangelical teaching. Am I not right in saying that the dispute between the two parties in the Church ceases to be a theological, and has already become a social and economical, one? If the legislature and the laity do not desire to see an infidel population growing up among us, they must no longer afford their patronage to evangelicalism. Genevanism, in its own native mountains, has merged into Unitarianism; and the same result, or something worse, may perhaps occur here.

August 23, 1851.

SPECTATOR.

\* This independence on the part of poor-house residents does them great credit. In agricultural districts they are commonly intimidated out of their opinions.—ED. OF R.

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 PHONETICS VERSUS SUNDAY.
 

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SIR,—A few weeks ago a number of working men in Galashiels formed themselves into a class for the purpose of receiving instruction in phonography. A school-room was obtained, and they met once a-week after the labours of the day, and were making satisfactory progress in this useful art, when, to their great surprise, the Dominie who had granted the use of the school-room told them they could have it no longer, because (observe the reason) in a number of the *Phonetic Journal* which had been left on the table on a previous evening he found an article recommending those who were able and had opportunity, to teach the principles and practice of the spelling reform on the Sunday. This godly man is a member of the established Kirk of Scotland.

W. S.

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 STOCKPORT AGENCY.
 

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SIR,—On the 'Open Page' of the *Reasoner* I see that some Mr. Newton has been making application to know where he might obtain your publications in Stockport. I desire you to state in the *Reasoner*, for the information of Mr. Newton and others making similar applications from this neighbourhood, that John Hindle will be happy to supply all liberal and freethinking publications at his establishment, 9, Bridge Street Brow, Stockport.

You may insert my name on the wrapper of the Monthly Parts, as one willing to correspond for the extension of the circulation of the *Reasoner*.

In the Monthly Part wrapper Mr. Newton may see names of other agents as well as my own.

JOHN HINDLE.

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 NEW WORKING MAN'S BIBLE.
 

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SIR,—Messrs. W. and R. McPhun, Glasgow, are distinguished publishers of religious literature. They have just now issued a working man's family Bible for one pound—notes by Scott and Henry, condensed by Professor Eadie, who writes a preface, and new notes are supplied by the Rev. W. McGilviray. Though we have got to the middle of the nineteenth century, there is not, in the explanations to the first chapter of Genesis, one single reference to Geology, a science which has demonstrated that the literal meaning of that chapter is quite fabulous. But that is not all; in their chronological table we are told the *creation* is 4004 years before Christ—and in an explanation to the Flood we are told the fossile remains of eminences clearly prove it.

A bit of Geology looks very handsome when there is no necessity to explain away an old popular meaning; but mountain fossils, if further questioned, will have small propensity to talk of Noah's flood, and be as apt to take us back forty millions of years as four thousands. Professor Eadie and his reverend colleague ought to know that this is not the thing to combat the Rationalism the preface to said Bible dreads.

Messrs. McPhun also attack Catholicism in a new publication, the *Scottish Protestant*, a penny weekly periodical. The front woodcut is generally from the most outrageous corner of the chamber of horrors. The editor has a goodly stock

of nicknames and interjections, and there is a vulgarity about the whole would ruin an infidel publisher in a short time—yet this is the progress of religious defence in Glasgow.

Barrhead, August 18th, 1851.

J. T. S.

**Reasoner Propaganda.**

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 273, 583s. 6d.—A Friend, from the land of Burns, 20s.—Thomas Porcliffe, Lepton, 1s.—Richard Berry, do. (per Mr. Porcliffe), 1s.—P. P. M., Greenwich, 2s. 6d.—John Gurney, Long Buckley, 1s.—J. C., 1s. 6d.—J. L., 1s.—J. W. Allen, London, 1s.—Per Willis Knowles, Hyde (some weeks since), 2s.—A. T. E., 1s.—J. S., Oxford, 2s. 6d.—E. W., 2s. 6d.—J. W. C., 2s. 6d.—Isaac Newton, 2s. 6d.—John Russell, Barrhead, 1s. 6d.—Mr. Binyon, 6d.—Total 627s. 6d.

**GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.**

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Sept. 7 [7], Henry Knight, 'Estate of the Christian and that of the Infidel compared.' Sept. 10th, [8], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

Hall of Science, City Road.—Sep. 7, Closed for alteration.

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Sept. 7th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

**ADVERTISEMENTS.**

**POPULAR WORKS.**

Theodore Parker on Matters Pertaining to Religion. 1 vol. cloth boards	1 9
Cooper's Purgatory of Suicides. 1 vol. cloth lettered	3 6
To be had in Parts and Numbers.	
Cooper's Wise Saws and Modern Instances. 2 vols. cloth lettered	5 0
Cooper's Baron's Yule Feast. Wrapper.	1 6
Cooper's Eight Letters to the Young Men of the Working Classes	0 6
Cooper's Journal. 1 vol. cloth	3 0
Do. Captain Cobler, or the Lincolnshire Insurrection. 1 vol.	2 6
Cerebral Physiology and Materialism. By W. C. Englewood, M.D.	0 2
Doubts of Infidels	0 3
Paine's Political Works. 2 vols. in one.	5 0
— Theological Works. 1 vol. cloth.	3 0
— Rights of Man	1 2
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— Common Sense	0 6
— Letter to the Abbe Raynal	0 6
— Letters to the Citizens of the United States	0 4
— Public Good	0 4
— Agrarian Justice	0 2
— First Principles of Government	0 2
— English System of Finance	0 3
— Abolition of Royalty	0 2
Life of Paine, by W. J. Linton	0 6
Portrait of Paine, engraved on Steel	1 0
The English Republic, edited by W. J. Linton. Nos. 1 to 7, each at	0 6
Byron's Vision of Judgment	0 2
Southey's Wat Tyler	0 3
Essay on the Functions of the Brain	0 2

London: James Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster-row.

**FOWLER'S WORKS.**

MR. BARKER'S EDITION OF FOWLER'S WORKS, reprinted and published by George Turner, Stoke-upon-Trent, Staffordshire.

Just ready, price 2d., the 4th edition of Amateness, or the Evils and Remedies of Excessive and Perverted Sexuality, including Warning and Advice to the Married and Single.

Love and Parentage, applied to the Improvement of Offspring	0 3
Matrimony; or Phrenology and Physiology applied to the selection of congenial companions for life	0 3
Memory and Intellectual Improvement, applied to Self-Education	0 5
Lessons on Physiology. Designed for the use of children and youth	0 3
Lessons on Phrenology. Designed for the use of children and youth	0 6
Intemperance and Tight Lacing	0 3
Hereditary Descent—its Laws and Facts applied to Human Improvement	0 9
Physiology, Animal and Mental, applied to the Preservation of Health of Mind and Body	0 10
Tobacco—its Effects on the Body and Mind	0 2
The whole of the above tracts, neatly bound in cloth boards, price 5s.	

London: Sold wholesale and retail by J. Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster Row. Mr. A. Heywood, Oldham St., Manchester.

Our Open Page.

THE British organisation of the Evangelical Alliance has announced a fifth annual conference to be held in London, at which Professor Martin is to read a paper on the Aspects of Infidelity as affecting our own country. The state and prospects of Evangelical Religion in countries in which the French Language is spoken to be brought under the consideration of the Conference, in papers prepared by Napoleon Roussel, on Infidelity in France; M. Grandpierre, on Sabbath Desecration in France; M. Burnier, on Infidelity in Switzerland. The *British Banner* pompously says, 'The meeting will be the most important ever held in this or any other land in present or former times. The publication of its great body of papers will be an era in Christian literature. The meeting itself will constitute the chief event of the memorable year 1851. Whether viewed in relation to Pantheism, or to Popery, or to Infidelity, or to Evangelism, it is in our view full of glorious promises.'

The twenty-second Thousand of the 'Logic of Death' is in the hands of our publisher.

In recording the death of Mr. David Hetherington, we omitted to notice (owing to not being aware of it), that he left a wife. She returned to her parent's home, and we are informed that on the 14th of August she became a mother, and that herself and son are doing well.

We thank Mr. P. for his report of the discussion at the Bowit Chapel, Preston, on Mr. Hamilton's lecture upon the 'True God' and the 'True Priest.'

Mr. Cook, of Bristol, has lately forwarded *Reasoners* to thirty ministers of that city.

'The Apocryphal Psalm attributed to the Hebrew Melodist, David, but not believed to be his,' with which we have been favoured by a correspondent, has a tone of levity which we wish to avoid in the *Reasoner*.

Mr. Shillito, of York, desires his name to be taken from our list of booksellers who supply the *Reasoner*, which appears on the wrapper of our Monthly Part. We trust our friends in every town will ascertain for us personally whether any objection exists on the part of any Agent to our publishing his name. We shall carefully omit all such instances.

J. P., of Helburn Colliery, is informed that the 'Atheist Silenced' and the 'Theist Silenced' may probably be obtained from the secretary of the Social Institution, Old Garrat Road, Manchester. None can be had in London.

As Mr. MacDade's young friend is suffering from ill health, we do not think the publication of the case, however interesting, is justifiable while he is in that state: it might augment his aberration to find himself the subject of public curiosity.

L. S. B., of Halifax, J. Clarke, and W. Storer, of Nottingham, who sent subscriptions lately and have neglected to forward addresses, will please do so, as the said subscriptions are due to them again by the terms on which they were asked for.

We have had applications recently for complete sets of the *Reasoner*. Any friends having volumes 1, 2, and 8, to spare will oblige by informing us. Being the only record of the class of opinions it represents during the period of its existence, the *Reasoner* has begun to acquire historical value in the eyes of the curious.

Eight shillings have been received for tracts from the John Street Tract Society, from friends in A., K., per 'Epicurus.' The money has been handed to the secretary.

# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## ADVENTURES IN WHITEHAVEN.

(CONCLUDED.)

CERTAINLY I did not want to fight the people of Whitehaven—if I had, I should have taken an Amphitheatre instead of a theatre, and invited them one at a time into the ring. I went to reason with them. It was no part of my taste to die in Whitehaven. I was not sure whether the town was worth the trouble. Next, it would have exposed me to the objections of friends, who would have thought the step premature. Besides, when a man is to be killed in an irregular way, he ought to be indulged in so trifling a matter as to his choice of the place and the selection of his own Calcrafts.

The first lecture was well received. The audience included ladies—the gallery was filled, the pit moderately, and the boxes were just inhabited. What was said the reader has already seen quoted from the *Whitehaven Herald*, whose excellent report has done much to disarm the prejudice of the intelligent part of the town. My subject was ‘An Examination of the Moral Innocency of Speculative Opinion, even the most extreme, when conscientiously entertained, with a view to ascertain how far a man might dissent from the Religious opinions of his neighbours and yet hope to live in Truth and die in Peace;’ the latter part having reference to the death of Lennon. My expectations were verified as to the audience. They were astonished at not being outraged, and they saw that a speaker might effect conviction without putting the ‘Devil’ on his placard. I put a distinct case before them. One they could not fight, and one they could not reason against, and all the discussion amounted to was a few feeble speeches and a few reluctant admissions. The trick was tried of asking me if I believed the Bible to be the revealed will of God?—Whether I believed in the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ? etc., etc. I answered that they should know my opinions on those subjects quickly enough should I have an opportunity of speaking upon them in Whitehaven. For the present, while I was obliged by the expression of their curiosity, I must confine myself to the subject on my placard, or the public would complain that under the pretext of speaking on one subject I had introduced others. It might gratify me and them to talk about anything else, but there was something higher than gratification, and that was good faith; and as nothing more had to be said on the proper topic of the night, I, thanking them for their attention, closed the meeting, when the forms of debate had occupied us perhaps three-quarters of an hour.

After this lecture was over and peace seemed to resume her sway, a well accredited report came into head quarters that a band of disappointed desperadoes, regretting their mischance the preceding night through my taking an unexpected turn up fresh streets, had resolved to waylay me and do me the honour of breaking my head.

The lecture on the next night was ‘Catholicism the Type of the Churches around

us.' Our fortifications were the same as before, and the order of the audience was as marked as during the lecture of the preceding night; but those able to discuss remained silent, and abandoned the debate to those whose intellect lay in their fists. A conspicuous object in the side gallery, wearing a white coat and a loose arm (a galvanic arm I say, for it swung round incessantly and irregularly, apparently of its own accord), was the sedate figure of Mr. Stuart Porter, Wesleyan local preacher, who vociferated with every gyration of the ulna till he infected all around him—and at last some one of his own friends took St. Paul's advice, and stopped his voice by stopping his mouth, *i. e.*, by laying a heavy hand on that volcanic organ. While this was going on a grey-headed Christian got into furious action on his own account in front of the gallery, and threw his arms about in a frantic manner. I thought his intention was to throw stones—his behaviour was such as might be designed to cover that species of appeal to my judgment. 'You damned villain,' he exclaimed as he warmed, 'you said there was no God.' Not sure whether he was drunk with the Holy Spirit, or any other exciseable spirit (they both pay duty), I said 'Sir, I think you are slightly mistaken. When did I say so?' He answered, 'You said last night "if there be a God," which meant that you did not believe there was.' Finding he had sense enough to be malicious, I suggested that since Theism was admitted to be a question of probability, it became the believer to use the same language, as he did not lay claim to certain knowledge on the subject. My language, therefore, was neutral, and could not and did not absolutely imply what he alleged. He was right as to the fact, but not as to the expression of my opinion. Rudeness, however, being more to his taste than logic, he answered as before—'Ah, you damned villain, you said there was no God.' The Wesleyan preacher had by this time got his mouth at liberty, and he joined in the roar with this venerable saint, and they divided the honours of the debate between them. As often as they were exhausted I said a few words in answer to a gentleman in a side box, who had adopted no less a creed than the whole of the New Testament. While this melo-drama was enacting inside, some of my friends were soliciting the assistance of the police to remove the disturbers. But the police refused with expressions which showed they hoped a disturbance might take place. Several persons reported that one of the sergeants (Bradly I think his name was) produced his handcuffs at the door and incited the bystanders to riot, saying 'the women had more courage than the men. Would they stand by and let any blackguard fellow come there and say there was no God?' And the worthy sergeant seasoned his pious and judicious exhortation by an appropriate oath. I have desired the evidence of this speech to be reduced to writing and authenticated; which, if done, I will take care comes under the notice of the parties who are responsible for this kind of conduct. A policeman on the following day assured me that he did not think sergeant B. would act so—but as there were three clergymen magistrates he might calculate on their sanction. The superintendent, he was sure, would protect all parties equally. No help, however, being obtainable at the Theatre from the police, we managed our own affairs. The noisy we let talk uninterrupted till the sound of their own voice became a disgrace to them. Two persons walked on the stage to enjoy the advantages of a closer intercourse with me; but, suspecting the enjoyment might not be mutual, I refused to answer any question till they resumed their proper places. The second man who clambered on the stage had an incoherent look with him, and seemed to meditate some personal attention to me. I assured him that I was sensible of the consideration he showed me by the trouble he was taking to come to me, but I

could receive no communication from a stranger which was not public, and what was public I could hear better at a distance. Shortly after I dissolved the meeting, and closing a spring hat up which I had worn that night, I put on my travelling cap, and my body-guard taking me a new route home, we eluded the gentlemen who were good enough to lay wait for me in Upper Roper Street.

Thus the rule of offering no provocation and yielding to no intimidation, carried us through. The utmost expression of legitimate opinion was exercised, and the reports in the *Whitehaven Herald* is a public record of what character our views are. The magistracy and clergy and townspeople have now before them an example of the advocacy we attempt, and no doubt on another occasion will see that we are entitled at least to that civil protection which the State guarantees to all peaceable and propagandist parties. It was frequently said during the progress of the lectures that the town would be free if they could be got through. It does not appear to me that any further danger is to be apprehended if the conduct pursued is constantly unprovocative, explicit, respectful, and firm.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### DEATH OF MR. JOHN LENNON, OF WHITEHAVEN.

I DOUBT not there are few localities, where there exists any portion of our friends, that have not, at one period or other, felt the loss of some valued coadjutor in the cause of freedom of opinion. We begin now to know too often and too painfully what it is to lose a fellow-worker in the great cause of human progression. Our friends around, I trust, will bear with me if I be a little minute in the detail of Mr. John Lennon's death. He was no common man, and his demise and burial (as was his life) have been an exciting feature in our local annals. 'John Lennon' is a name familiar to the ear of old and young, rich and poor, in the town where he resided. For years he had been known, not only at home, but in the various ports he visited as a sea-faring man, for his incessant, unflinching, and able advocacy of what appeared to him to be truth. The clergy, the medical profession—for he was as conversant in chemistry as he was in theology—and the public at large knew Mr. Lennon as a sincere, consistent, and untiring propagandist of Rational principles; and they knew him also as a man of tried morality. Our solace for his loss is here; to think of these things is our consolation, as it is, also, on the other hand, our grief. The last important act of our friend's life was the anxious aid he gave towards getting Mr. Holyoake down to Whitehaven. His sudden death, from the rupture of some vessel during a fit of coughing—the primary cause of which was the lingering effects of a cold—unhappily prevented his living to enjoy the anticipated reward of his anxious exertion.

Owing to the well-known principles of Mr. Lennon, and the extraordinary announcement of the Curate of St. James's Church, that the usual funeral service could not be read over the body, in consequence of the opinions entertained, when living, by our deceased friend—an intense excitement existed in the town on the day of interment. The assemblage of people was unparalleled—a tribute to the fact of our friend not having died without a name. When the relatives and others reached the grave, without any previous arrangement, two of our friends spoke to the people, impulsively; the latter going to show, by various passages from Scripture, in reply to a statement afloat 'that God had taken Mr. Lennon off as a judgment', that the opposite, from the authority of the Bible, must be the case, and

that our friend's sudden release was in reality a signal mark of mercy on the part of the Deity towards him. Contrary, I presume, to the anticipation of the clerical gentleman concerned, the result has been precisely what our deeply-regretted brother would have wished. His desire was well known; and it is consolatory to think that, with the approval of his widow, what was our departed friend's request, through the act of the clergyman himself should so happily have taken place at his burial. All has been well, under the circumstances; and it has prepared the way for others to imitate the example.

None better deserved the melancholy honour of being the first so to be interred among us than the deeply-lamented friend who has gone. Mr. Lennon was in his 38th year, a muscular and apparently extremely healthy man. He was a total abstainer on principle, without any pledge, and was decidedly a most valuable man to the friends in this town; he has died regretted and respected by his friends, and by the unprejudiced of all classes of the community. A widow and three little children are left to meet the warfare of a competitive world.

August 15, 1851.

Z.

[This notice is from the pen of a Whitehaven correspondent. I sought an opportunity of calling on Mrs. Lennon myself, and found that the reports made to me as to her personal worth were no doubt capable of being corroborated. Industrious and reputable, she will make patient and honest exertion to support her family. The eldest boy might be placed out to learn some trade, and a few pounds would accomplish that object, and I ask our friends, who may be able to help, to send me a few subscriptions for that purpose. Friends in Whitehaven have done and do what they can, but some further tribute is due to the widow and children of such a man as Lennon, of whom I found all classes spoke well as to his ability and morality.—G. J. HOLYOAKE.]

### SYMBOLISM.

In the absence of a written language, or of forms of expression capable of conveying abstract ideas, we can readily comprehend the necessity, among a primitive people, of a symbolic system. That symbolism in a great degree resulted from this necessity, is very obvious; and that, associated with man's primitive religious systems, it was afterwards continued, when in the advanced stage of the human mind the previous necessity no longer existed, is equally undoubted. It thus came to constitute a kind of sacred language, and became invested with an esoteric significance understood only by the few. With the mass of men, the meaning of the original emblem, or the reason for its adoption, the necessity for its use being superseded, was finally forgotten, or but imperfectly remembered. A superstitious reverence, the consequence of long association, and encouraged by a cunning priesthood, nevertheless continued to attach to the symbol, which, from being the representation of an adorable attribute or manifestation of God, became itself an object of adoration. Such, it seems to me, was the origin of idolatry, in its common or technical sense. We may take an example: the SUN, the dispenser of heat and light, the vivifier, beneficent and genial in its influences, the most obvious, as it is the most potent and glorious object in the natural creation, fitly and almost universally emblematised the First Principle. With its annually returning strength the germs quickened, the leaves and blossoms unfolded themselves; and beneath its glow the fruits ripened, and the earth was full of luxuriance and life. Under this aspect it was God the Life-giver, God the Beneficent.—*American Archaeological Researches*, No. 1. By E. G. Squier, A.M., New York.



### Examination of the Press.

**THE HERETIC STOKER.**—A correspondent of the *Athenæum* gives the following account of the blessing of a steam engine by the Archbishop of Pistoia, on the opening of a Railway Station at that place on the 12th of July last:—A space on the rail was cleared in front of a raised dais—and the engine, decorated with a profusion of flowers, was brought up to receive its benediction. Presently the archiepiscopal carriage with its four laced livery servants arrived; and, after a short time occupied in robing, the Archbishop, in mitre and flowing robes—preceded by priests bearing folio volumes, and lighted candles, and holy water-pots, and umbrellas, and other blessing tools—came out on the platform, and addressed himself to the task assigned. He began to chant some form from a large volume, and the attendant priests from time to time to shout responses; but, whether from the mismanagement of the steam by a heretic British stoker, or whether, in the language of times more in keeping with the ceremony in performance, the devil was bodily present in the unhallowed machine—so it was, that the huge monster took his blessing very fractiously; and from a minute after the commencement of the performance to its conclusion never ceased to blow forth steam, and roar and spit and scream in a manner that utterly overpowered the utmost efforts of voice of those engaged in blessing it. To make the matter still worse, the band, which was stationed at some distance down the platform, and which was shut out from sight of what was going on by the surrounding crowd, supposed on hearing this irreverent behaviour on the part of the engine that the function was concluded—and struck up as loud a polka as they could in order if possible to make themselves heard above the noisy monster. The scene produce may be imagined. The Archbishop might be seen by the nodding of his head and the movement of his jaws to be making bravely on with his work against all difficulties. The one priest who could see the book from which the bishop read, and watched his finger travel down the page, signalled to the others when to roar their response. They laughed to each other, put their fingers in their ears, and bellowed their utmost—in vain. Thus, however, the blessing was achieved; and the ill-behaved machine was hurried off by its keepers still sputtering and shrieking under the holy-water application like a veritable child of the evil one.

**IMPORTANT MOVEMENT IN CALCUTTA.**—The suspension of the State allowance to the temple of Juggernaut, and some cases which have been decided in accordance with the recently passed Toleration Act (No. 21 of 1850), have given rise to an anti-missionary movement among the orthodox Hindoos at Calcutta. At all three Presidencies an English education is considered by all classes of natives as the shortest road to wealth, and the only cheap English education obtainable is that afforded by the mission schools. Many thousands of native children are accordingly educated at these institutions, and now and then (though such an occurrence is wonderfully rare) a Hindoo youth is converted, much to the scandal of the native community. Many of these outcasts, on arriving at years of discretion, are desirous of returning to the religion of their fathers, but they have hitherto been prevented from so doing by the impossible severity of the mode of expiating loss of caste (wandering 48 years as an ascetic) hitherto insisted on. A great meeting of orthodox Hindoos has accordingly been held at Calcutta, for the purpose of substituting a milder form of expiation. It was stated at the meeting that there were fifty

Christian converts at Calcutta, who would return to the Hindoo creed as soon as the milder form of penance was assented to. There is little doubt that it will be so eventually. All things considered, the number of converts to Christianity made in Bengal and Western India is astonishingly small. In the Bombay Presidency there are (according to the almanack) about fifty missionaries of various denominations, yet a conversion is very seldom heard of. The island of Bombay itself contains an insulated native population of about 500,000, who are remarkably free from caste prejudices, and have lived under an English Government for nearly two centuries, yet there are not half a dozen native communicants to be found in Bombay. This result is very discouraging when contrasted with the rapid, extended, and permanent success obtained by the Jesuit missionaries of the European Power that preceded us in Western India.—*Daily paper.*

THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS.—The *Bible*, I say, the *Bible* only, is the religion of Protestants! Whatsoever else they believe besides it and the plain, irrefragable, indubitable consequences of it, well may they hold it as a matter of opinion; but as matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds believe it themselves, nor require the belief of it of others, without most high and most schismatical presumption. I, for my part, after a long and (as I verily believe and hope) impartial search of 'the true way to eternal happiness,' do profess plainly that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot but upon this rock only. I see plainly and with my own eyes that there are popes against popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age. Traditive interpretations of Scripture are pretended; but there are few or none to be found: no tradition but only of Scripture can derive itself from the fountain but may be plainly proved either to have been brought in such an age after Christ, or that in such an age it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certainty but of Scripture for any considering man to build upon. This, therefore, and this only, I have reason to believe: this I will profess; according to this I will live, and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly but gladly lose my life, though I should be sorry that Christians should take it from me. Propose me anything out of this book, and require whether I believe it or no, and, seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this: God has said so; therefore it is true. In other things I will take no man's liberty of judgment from him, neither shall any man take mine from me. I will think no man the worse man, nor the worse Christian: I will love no man the less for differing in opinion from me; and what measure I mete to others I expect from them again. I am fully assured that God does not, and, therefore, that men ought not to require any more of any man than this: to believe the Scripture to be God's word; to endeavour to find the true sense of it; and to live according to it.—*Chillingworth.*

MISSIONARY LABOURS IN INDIA.—When the Hindoos called a man Christian, they for the most part meant that he was a Drunkard!.....For ONE really converted Christian as the fruit of Missionary labour, the drinking practices of the English had made ONE THOUSAND DRUNKARDS.—*Archdeacon Jeffries, of Bombay.*

## Readings from Macaulay's Critical Essays.

**THE STATIONARINESS OF THEOLOGY.** THERE are branches of knowledge with respect to which the law of the human mind is progress. In mathematics, when once a proposition has been demonstrated, it is never afterwards contested. Every fresh story is as solid a basis for a new superstructure as the original foundation was. Here, therefore, there is a constant addition to the stock of truth. In the inductive science again, the law is progress. Every day furnishes new facts, and thus brings theory nearer and nearer to perfection. There is no chance that either in the purely demonstrative, or in the purely experimental sciences, the world will ever go back or even remain stationery. Nobody ever heard of a reaction against Taylor's theorem, or of a reaction against Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood.

But with theology the case is very different. As respects natural religion—revelation being for the present altogether left out of the question—it is not easy to see that a philosopher of the present day is more favourably situated than Thales or Simonides. He has before him just the same evidence of design in the structure of the universe which the early Greeks had. We say just the same; for the discovery of modern astronomers and anatomists have really added nothing to the force of that argument which a reflecting mind finds in every beast, bird, insect, fish, leaf, flower, and shell. The reasoning by which Socrates, in Xenophon's hearing, confuted the little atheist Aristodemus, is exactly the reasoning of Paley's Natural Theology. Socrates makes precisely the same use of the statues of Polycletus and the pictures of Zeuxis which Paley makes of the watch. As to the other great question, the question, what becomes of man after death, we do not see that a highly educated European, left

to his unassisted reason, is more likely to be in the right than a Blackfoot Indian. Not a single one of the many sciences in which we surpass the Blackfoot Indians throws the smallest light on the state of the soul after the animal life is extinct. In truth all the philosophers, ancient and modern, who have attempted, without the help of revelation, to prove the immortality of man, from Plato down to Franklin, appear to us to have failed deplorably.

Then, again, all the great enigmas which perplex the natural theologian are the same in all ages. The ingenuity of a people just emerging from barbarism is quite sufficient to propound them. The genius of Locke or Clarke is quite unable to solve them. It is a mistake to imagine that subtle speculations touching the Divine attributes, the origin of evil, the necessity of human action, the foundation of moral obligation, imply any high degree of intellectual culture. Such speculation, on the contrary, are in a peculiar manner the delight of intelligent children and of half. The number of boys is not small who, at fourteen, have thought enough on these questions to be fully entitled to the praise which Voltaire gives Zadig, 'Il en savait ce qu'on ou a su dans tous les ages; c'est-a-dire fort peu de chose.' The book of Job shows that, long before letters and arts were known to Ionia, these vexing questions were debated with no common skill and eloquence, under the tents of the Idumean Emirs; nor has human reason, in the course of three thousand years, discovered any satisfactory solution of the riddles which perplexed Eliphaz and Zophar.

Natural theology, then, is not a progressive science. That knowledge of our origin and of our destiny which we derive from revelation is indeed of very different clearness, and of very different importance. But neither is revealed

religion of the nature of a progressive science. All Divine truth is, according to the doctrine of the Protestant Churches, recorded in certain books. It is equally open to all who, in any age, can read these books; nor can all the discoveries of all the philosophers in the world add a single verse to any of those books. It is plain that in divinity there cannot be a progress analogous to that which is constantly taking place in pharmacy, geology, and navigation. A Christian of the fifth century with a Bible is neither better nor worse situated than a Christian of the nineteenth century with a Bible, candour and natural acuteness being, of course, supposed equal. It matters not at all that the compass, printing, gunpowder, steam, gas, vaccination, and a thousand other discoveries and inventions, which were unknown in the fifth century, are familiar to the nineteenth. None of these discoveries and inventions has the smallest bearing on the question whether man is justified by faith alone, or whether the invocation of saints is an orthodox practice. It seems to us, therefore, that we have no security for the future against the prevalence of any theological error that ever has prevailed in time past among Christian men. We are confident that the world will never go back to the solar system of Ptolemy; nor is our confidence in the least shaken by the circumstance, that even so great a man as Bacon rejected the theory of Galileo with scorn; for Bacon had not all the means of arriving at a sound conclusion which are within our reach, and which secure people who would not have been worthy to mend his pens from falling into his mistakes.

But when we reflect that Sir Thomas More was ready to die for the doctrine of transubstantiation, we cannot but feel some doubt whether the doctrine of transubstantiation may not triumph over all opposition. More was a man of eminent talents. He had all the information on the subject that we have, or that, while the world lasts, any human being will have. The text, 'This is my body,' was in his New Testament as it is in ours. The absurdity of the literal interpretation was as great and as obvious in the sixteenth century as it is now. No progress that science has

made, or will make, can add to what seems to us the overwhelming force of the argument against the real presence. We are, therefore, unable to understand why what Sir Thomas More believed respecting transubstantiation may not be believed to the end of time by men equal in abilities and honesty to Sir Thomas More. But Sir Thomas More is one of the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue; and the doctrine of transubstantiation is a kind of proof charge. A faith which stands that test will stand any test. The prophecies of Brothers and the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe sink to trifles in the comparison.

One reservation, indeed, must be made. The books and traditions of a sect may contain, mingled with propositions strictly theological, other propositions purporting to rest on the same authority, which relate to physics. If new discoveries should throw discredit on the physical propositions, the theological propositions will share in that discredit. In this way, undoubtedly, the progress of science may indirectly serve the cause of religious truth. The Hindoo mythology, for example, is bound up with a most absurd geography. Every young Brahmin, therefore, who learns geography in our colleges, learns to smile at the Hindoo mythology. If Catholicism has not suffered to an equal degree from the Papal decision that the sun goes round the earth, this is because all intelligent Catholics now hold, with Pascal, that, in deciding the point at all, the church exceeded her powers, and was, therefore, justly left destitute of that supernatural assistance which, in the exercise of her legitimate functions, the promise of her founder authorised her to expect.

This reservation affects not at all the truth of our proposition, that divinity, properly so called, is not a progressive science.

A very common knowledge of history, a very little observation of life, will suffice to prove that no learning, no sagacity, affords a security against the greatest errors on subjects relating to the invisible world. Bayle and Chillingworth, two of the most sceptical of mankind, turned Catholics from sincere conviction. Johnson, incredulous on all

other points, was a ready believer in miracles and apparitions. He would not believe in Ossian; but he was willing to believe in the second sight. He would not believe in the earthquake of Lisbon; but he was willing to believe in the Cock Lane ghost.

For these reasons we have ceased to wonder at any vagaries of superstition. We have seen men, not of mean intellect or neglected education, but qualified by their talents and acquirements to attain eminence either in active or speculative pursuits, well read scholars, expert logicians, keen observers of life and manners, prophesying, interpreting, talking unknown tongues, working miraculous cures, coming down with messages from God to the House of Commons. We have seen an old woman, with no talents beyond the cunning of a fortune-teller, and with the education of a scullion, exalted into a prophetess, and surrounded by tens of thousands of devoted followers, many of whom were, in station and knowledge, immeasurably her superiors; and all this in the nineteenth century; and all this in London. Yet why not? For of the dealings of God with man no more has been revealed to the nineteenth century than to the first, or to London than to the wildest parish in the Hebrides. It is true that, in those things which concern this life and this world, man constantly becomes wiser and wiser. But it is no less true that, as respects a higher power and a future state, man, in the language of Goethe's scoffing fiend,

—'bleibt stets von gleichem schlag;  
Und ist so wunderbar als wie am ersten tag.\*'

#### THE CHARACTER OF CRANMER.

The plot failed; Popery triumphed; and Cranmer recanted. Most people look on his recantation as a single blemish on an honourable life, the frailty of an unguarded moment. But, in fact, his recantation was in strict accordance with the system on which he had constantly acted. It was part of a regular

\* Which, so far as we are able to interpret, means—

—'remains the same alway;  
As wondrous now as on its earliest day.

habit. It was not the first recantation that he had made; and, in all probability, if it had answered its purpose, it would not have been the last. We do not blame him for not choosing to be burnt alive. It is no very severe reproach to any person that he does not possess heroic fortitude. But surely a man who liked the fire so little should have had some sympathy for others. A persecutor who inflicts nothing which he is not ready to endure deserves some respect. But when a man who loves his doctrines more than the lives of his neighbours loves his own little finger better than his doctrines, a very simple argument *à fortiori* will enable us to estimate the amount of his benevolence.

But his martyrdom, it is said, redeemed everything. It is extraordinary that so much ignorance should exist on this subject. The fact is that, if a martyr be a man who chooses to die rather than to denounce his opinions, Cranmer was no more a martyr than Dr. Dodd. He died solely because he could not help it. He never retracted his recantation till he found he had made it in vain. The Queen was fully resolved that, Catholic or Protestant, he should burn. Then he spoke out, as people generally speak out when they are at the point of death and have nothing to hope or to fear on earth. If Mary had suffered him to live, we suspect that he would have heard mass and received absolution, like a good Catholic, till the accession of Elizabeth, and that he would then have purchased, by another apostasy, the power of burning men better and braver than himself.

We do not mean, however, to represent Cranmer as a monster of wickedness. He was not wantonly cruel or treacherous. He was merely a supple, timid, interested courtier, in times of frequent and violent change. That which has always been represented as his distinguishing virtue, the facility with which he forgave his enemies, belongs to the character. Slaves of his class are never vindictive, and never grateful. A present interest effaces past services and past injuries from their minds together. Their only object is self-preservation; and for this they conciliate those who wrong them, just as they abandon those who serve them. Before we extol a man for his forgiving

temper, we should inquire whether he is above revenge or below it.

Somerset had as little principle as his adjutor. Of Henry, an orthodox Catholic, except that he chose to be his own Pope, and of Elizabeth, who certainly had no objection to the theology of Rome, we needsay nothing. These four persons were the great authors of the English Reformation. Three of them had a direct interest in the extension of the royal prerogative. The fourth was the ready tool of any who could frighten him. It is not difficult to see from what motives, and on what plan, such persons would be inclined to remodel the Church. The scheme was merely to transfer the full cup of sorceries from the Babylonian enchantress to other hands, spilling as little as possible by the way. The Catholic doctrines and rites were to be retained in the Church of England. But the King was to exercise the control which had formerly belonged to the Roman Pontiff. In this Henry for a time succeeded. The extraordinary force of his character, the fortunate situation in which he stood with respect to foreign powers, and the vast resources which the suppression of the monasteries placed at his disposal, enabled him to oppress both the religious factions equally. He punished with impartial severity those who renounced the doctrines of Rome, and those who acknowledged her jurisdiction. The basis, however, on which he attempted to establish his power was too narrow to be durable. It would have been impossible even for him long to persecute both persuasions. Even under his reign there had been insurrections on the part of the Catholics, and signs of a split which was likely soon to produce in-

surrection on the part of the Protestants. It was plainly necessary, therefore, that the Crown should form an alliance with one or with the other side. To recognise the Papal supremacy, would have been to abandon the whole design. Reluctantly and sullenly the government at last joined the Protestants. In forming this junction, its object was to procure as much aid as possible for its selfish undertaking, and to make the smallest possible concessions to the spirit of religious innovation.

From this compromise the Church of England sprang. In many respects, indeed, it has been well for her that, in an age of exuberant zeal, her principal founders were mere politicians. To this circumstance she owes her moderate articles, her decent ceremonies, her noble and pathetic liturgy. Her worship is not disfigured by mummary. Yet she has preserved, in a far greater degree than any of her Protestant sisters, the art of striking the senses and filling the imagination in which the Catholic Church so eminently excels. But, on the other hand, she continued to be, for more than a hundred and fifty years, the servile handmaid of monarchy, *the steady enemy of public liberty*. The divine right of kings, and the duty of passively obeying all their commands, were her favourite tenets. She held those tenets firmly through times of oppression, persecution, and licentiousness: while law was trampled down; while judgment was perverted; while the people were eaten as though they were bread. Once, and but once, for a moment, and but for a moment, when her own dignity and property were touched, she forgot to practice the submission which she had taught.

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## THE LEADING IDEA AND PROGRESS OF THE NEW GERMAN CHURCH OF HUMANITY.

SIR,—You will excuse the longer intermission of my Reformatory Sketches, it being caused by my departure from your country. I shall be glad if you will allow me to finish them here, and to continue them by others on our international relations.

Having given, in my last letter, the abbreviated copy of one of the newest manifestoes issued by the Germano-Catholic branch of our reform in Germany, I proceed now to the other branch, which arose from the Protestantism, and the most characteristic associations of which are called by themselves '*freie gemeinden*'—free congregations. They agree with the former in assisting the religious self-emancipation of mankind, but they are distinguished by the more consequent and bolder development of the great reformatory idea of the present time. That idea is, in our opinion, none other than this: *the abolishing of that dualism which has divided, since the beginning of the history of the world, the universum on this side and the other side.* All religions, without any exception, have been founded on this very illusion; and the eighteen hundred years of the Christendom are but too sufficient to prove that even itself is included. The universum is one—there is no room for a particular residence of one or many gods; and, if there must be a God, he can be nothing else than the immanent spirit of this universum, or the whole universum itself. *If there must be a God!* But this is the question. 'To be, or not to be!' The most advanced of our '*freie gemeinden*' are beyond that question, leaving all that which originated out of that *dualism*—as heaven, hell, God, devil, and all other things—to the churches or religions of the time past. They are antagonists of all those religions; and religion itself, understood in its very historical notion, is for them a thing which should be abolished—abolished by the power of knowledge. If they use yet that word, it is only in the quite new signification, as in their watchword—religion of humanity, or religion of freethought; all notion of transcendental being is taken away.

So, founded on the cosmical unity of the universum, on its immanent life and laws of life—founded on nature, reason, history, science, knowledge—founded first of all on the true and real nature and history of mankind—the principal endeavouring of the '*freie gemeinden*' is, theoretically, the cultivating and propagating of that new idea and contemplation of the world, and, practically, the regenerating of all social and political situations by the power of that idea.

That these endeavours, under the pressure of our present political conditions, can be nothing but painful and outward insignificant essays, is clear; but there is one reason more that the movement of this branch proceeds slowly, and more slowly than even that of the other branch. This reason is the consequence and resoluteness itself of its reformatory idea. The greater part of men like much more the twilight of half-progress than the sunlight of decided, bold, and complete progress. The greater part excuse their own immaturity and irresolution by the cant phrase 'it goes too far.'

We have in Germany about four hundred congregations of the Germano-Catholic branch, some of which contain a thousand members—that of Vienna four, and that of Breslau in Silesia ten, thousand. The congregations of the other

branch are but a few, the most in Saxo-Prussia; the most advanced are those of Halle and Nordhausen, both near the birth-place of Luther, viz., Eisleben. That of Nordhausen has a thousand members.

They all have quitted the churches—this having been their first and most decided step. They form now independent societies; and the latter go so far that they have abandoned any ecclesiastical character, confining themselves to be human associations, and to have at best one of their members as speaker or lecturer, without prejudice as to the equal right of discussion and lecturing of all who are able. Their meetings, in which any theme that belongs to the sphere of human knowledge is treated, are held on Sundays, mostly beginning and concluding by quartettos of man's song. The members belong for the most part to the poorer classes, possessing not too much for the compensation of their speakers, who are all men who have accomplished their theological studies, and the greater part of whom have abandoned the career of public officers.

As for the literature of these congregations, they have produced plenty of writings and books, and they have many journals which propagate their principles throughout the whole country. The best journals of the Germano-Catholic branch appear in Breslau; the best of the 'freie gemeinden,' which is especially dedicated to the development and most consequent perfecting of the new reformatory idea, is the so-called *Neue Reform, zur foerderung der Religion der Menschlich Keit* (New Reform, to the Furthering of the Religion of Humanity), edited by G. A. Wislicenus, the chief representative of this other branch, and speaker of the congregation of Halle.

I trust your readers will excuse the faults I make in your language, as well as the shortness and imperfection of these sketches themselves. I am travelling, and therefore have not that tranquillity of mind, which alone is the creator of better works. My intention was to give at least a true and correct sketch of that movement of my fatherland, which, in my opinion, is congenial to that advocated by your journal. I greet you and all your coworkers for the propagation of men's self-emancipation by the means of free-inquiry and knowledge, and I thank you very heartily for the kindness you have proved to me by introducing me to the circle of your readers.

Paris, 1851.

CARL SCHOLL.

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#### MR. HOLYOAKE'S LECTURE IN SOUTH SHIELDS.

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SIR,—Your late lecture at South Shields, I hear it said, was able, and delivered in a fair spirit, but that the ground of the lecture was mere assumption; for if Catholicism be the true type of New Testament Christianity, how is it that Papists themselves, and the Jesuits, prevent the circulation and reading of the New Testament?

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

X.

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[The Catholics see that the Scriptures present at least apparent contradictions which the illiterate may wrest to their own destruction, and therefore seek to keep the Bible in the hands of the church.—ED.]



## THE REV. MR. PHILLIPS.

SIR,—I perceive a statement in No. 274 of the *Reasoner*, that I said, at a public meeting in London, ‘that infidels and freethinkers were a set of mean, dishonest fellows; and that they knew it, but had not the honesty to confess it.’

Your correspondent must have misunderstood me, or been misinformed as to what I stated, or has intentionally misrepresented me; neither the sentiments nor the language of the above quotation belong to me. It is by no means difficult for a zealot of any party to mistake and give currency to his own inferences, as the statements of others. I think that you would feel surprised at hearing that I had made so sweeping a statement. My infidel neighbours know that my usual modes of thought and utterance do not find expression in the above. I will endeavour to say at the Institution, shortly, what I have written.

Northampton.

THOMAS PHILLIPS.

[We certainly were ‘surprised’ when we received the report of the language ascribed to Mr. Phillips. On a former occasion (*ante* No. 38) we bore testimony to his courtesy. We are bound, however, to say, in justice to our correspondent, that he maintains his assertion, and offers to bring corroboration of his statement. Our impression is, that there is some error as to Mr. Phillips’s identity, and that some one else has been mistaken for him.—ED.]

## ORIGINALITY—A LESSON TO REFORMERS AS WELL AS ARCHITECTS.

A DAY never passes without our hearing our English architects called upon to be original, and to invent a new style: about as sensible and necessary an exhortation as to ask of a man who has never had rags enough on his back to keep out cold to invent a new mode of cutting a coat. Give him a whole coat first, and let him concern himself about the fashion of it afterwards. We want no new style of architecture. Who wants a new style of painting or sculpture? But we want some style. It is of marvellously little importance if we have a code of laws and they be good laws, whether they be new or old, foreign or native, Roman or Saxon, Norman or English laws. But it is of considerable importance that we should have a code of laws of one kind or another, and that code accepted and enforced from one side of the island to the other, and not one law made ground of judgment in York and another in Exeter. And in like manner it does not matter one marble splinter whether we have an old or new architecture, but it matters everything whether we have an architecture truly so called or not; that is, whether an architecture whose laws might be taught at our schools from Cornwall to Northumberland, as we teach English spelling and English grammar, or an architecture which is to be invented fresh every time we build a workhouse or a parish school.

There seems to me to be a wonderful misunderstanding among the majority of architects of the present day as to the very nature and meaning of Originality, and of all wherein it consists. Originality in expression does not depend on invention of new words, nor originality in poetry on invention of new measures; nor in painting on invention of new colours or new modes of using them. The chords of music, the harmonies of colour, the general principles of the arrangement of sculptural masses, have been determined long ago, and, in all probability, cannot be

added to any more than they can be altered. Granting that there may be such additions or alterations are much more the work of time and of multitudes than of individual inventors. We may have one Van Eyck, who will be known as the introducer of a new style once in ten centuries, but he himself will trace his invention to some accidental bye-play or pursuit, and the uses of that invention will depend altogether on the popular necessities or instincts of the period. Originality depends on nothing of the kind. A man who has the gift will take up any style that is going, the style of his day, and will in that be great, and make everything he does in it look as fresh as if every thought of it had just come down from heaven. I do not say that he will not take liberties with his materials or with his rules: I do not say that strange changes will not sometimes be wrought by his efforts or his fancies in both. But those changes will be instructive, natural, facile, though sometimes marvellous; they will never be sought after as things necessary to his dignity or his independence: and those liberties will be like the liberties that a great speaker takes with the language—not a defiance of its rules for the sake of singularity, but inevitable, uncalculated, and brilliant consequences of an effort to express what the language without such infraction could not.

There may be times when, as I have above described, the life of an art is manifested in its changes and in its refusal of ancient limitations: so there are in the life of an insect; and there is great interest in the state of both the art and the insect at those periods when, by their natural progress and constitutional power, such changes are about to be wrought. But as that would be both an uncomfortable and foolish caterpillar which, instead of being contented with a caterpillar's life and feeding on caterpillar's food, was always striving to turn itself into a chrysalis; and as that would be an unhappy chrysalis which should lie awake at night and roll restlessly in its cocoon in efforts to turn itself permanently into a moth; so will that art be unhappy and unprosperous which, instead of supporting itself on the food and contenting itself with the customs which have been enough for the support and guidance of other arts before it and like it, is struggling and fretting under the natural limitations of its existence, and striving to become something other than it is. And though it is the notability of the highest creatures to look forward to, and partly to understand the changes which are appointed for them, preparing for them beforehand; and if, as is usual with appointed changes, they be into a higher state, ever desiring them and rejoicing in the hope of them, yet it is the strength of every creature, be it changeful or not, to rest for the time being, contented with the conditions of its existence and striving only to bring about the changes which it desires by fulfilling to the uttermost the duties for which its present state is appointed and continued.—*Lamp of Obedience*, p. 186. By John Ruskin.

#### DISMAL STATE OF BLAIRGOWRIE.

H. M., writing from the 'foot of the Grampians' complains that 'superstition and dark delusions' abound in those parts, and that there are no Institutions for imparting instruction to the people, not a Library worth the trouble of consulting. But he adds, we have the 'Established Church, the Episcopalians, the Roman Catholics, Seceders, Independents, Mormonites, and the (mis-called) Free Church.'

Our correspondent is in a small way of business, and by dint of perseverance supports a family of three children. The kind Sabbatarians will not suffer their

children to associate with his because he is known to entertain atheistical opinions. He asks whether he shall play the hypocrite and take his children to church, in order to avoid the slur cast upon them, or (to use his own words) 'continue in the same cheerful line he has been doing this many a year.' We think the conscientious and 'cheerful line' the one our correspondent should continue to pursue.

#### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Sept. 14 [7½], Henry Knight, 'Woman;—is her mind understood by man?' Sept. 10th, [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room, Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

Hall of Science, City Road.—(Closed for alteration.)

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Sept. 14th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

British Coffee Rooms, Edgeware Road.—Sept. 14th [7], Mr. Benny, 'The God of the Bible versus the God of Nature.'

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

#### ADVERTISEMENTS.

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Contain 40 columns of close print besides wrapper  
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BY ERNEST JONES.

Working men and trades' bodies are invited to send statements of their grievances, of every attempted reduction, and of every act of oppression perpetrated against them by their employers.

Reports of the weekly proceedings of the trades, and notices of their forthcoming meetings, will, if sent, be *gratuitously* inserted, as it is intended to make this work a comprehensive organ of defence for THE EMPLOYED AGAINST THE EMPLOYER.

No. 1 is now reprinted, with a classified index of the first seventeen numbers.

Read No. 19 for 'Doings of the Rich at Loughborough,' and

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being a lesson for the middle class and working class, as illustrated by the history of the London Tailors.

As this work is ready to be sent by the booksellers' parcels every Wednesday for each ensuing Saturday, agents have in no case any excuse for not supplying subscribers regularly with their weekly copies.

London: Pavey, 47, Holywell Street, Strand.

LITERARY INSTITUTION, JOHN STREET, FITZROY SQUARE.—Mrs. C. H. DEXTER will deliver an address to the Women of England in favour of a Dress Reform, on Monday evening, September 15th.

The lady, the wife of an artist, who has recently introduced this improvement in costume to the notice of her fair countrywomen, has already appeared in the metropolis alone, and has not, we are told, met with a single rude observation. She is habited in deep mourning, which gives the costume a very genteel appearance. The dress is of black crape, falling below the knee; trousers of black silk, very full, and drawn round the ankle with elastic cord, which allows them to hang gracefully over a cashmere boot with military heel; corded silk jackette, trimmed with crape, over which is thrown, 'en negligé,' a crape scarf; the head-dress, which is between a hat and a bonnet, is made of drawn crape and silk, without trimming; it is, however, exceedingly tasty and elegant, and extremely becoming; the only ornaments worn are jet bracelets and a jet anchor, which confines the jackette below the waist. The dress is altogether easy and graceful, and seems completely to put out of countenance the 'Lady street-sweepers of London.' *Vide public press.*

#### SYLLABUS OF THE LECTURE.

The right of woman to assert her right, at least in dress—The inconvenience of the present costume—Its injurious effect upon health—The dresses of the ancients—The effect of the prejudices of the past upon the opinions of the present—The general tendency of modern improvements—A strong declaration in favour of the dress movement, with its anticipated benefit to the Mothers, Wives, and Daughters of England!

Mrs. C. H. Dexter will gratify her friends and admirers by appearing upon this occasion in the Modern Female Costume!

To commence at half-past Eight. Admission to Hall, 2d.; Gallery, 3d.

#### MOVEMENT—INFORMATION—ENTERTAINMENT.

#### THE LEADER,

A complete Weekly Newspaper, price 6d.

For all Political movements—the manoeuvres of Parties at home, the combinations of Courts, Diplomats, and Armies abroad—the movements of Peoples in the struggle to achieve and enlarge their freedom: For all shapes of Progress—the Progress of the People in Association, Social Reform, and Education—the Progress of Discovery, Practical Knowledge, and Practical Science—the Progress of Free Action in Thought and Spiritual Development: For all that is going on in the world of Books and Art, in the Drama, in Personal News, in the changes of Trade and Industry, in Law and Police, and in Adventures far and wide: For a plain treatment of every subject in direct terms: For a free utterance of opinion, open to all—

#### SEE THE LEADER.

Published at 10, Wellington Street, Strand; and delivered in every part of the country every Saturday afternoon.

### Our Open Page.

A TRAVELLER, sauntering through the Lake districts of England some years ago, arrived at a small public-house just as a postman stopped to deliver a letter. A young girl came out to receive it. She took it in her hand, turned it over and over, and asked the charge? It was a large sum—no less than a shilling. Sighing heavily, she observed, that it came from her brother, but that she was too poor to take it in, and she returned it to the postman accordingly. The traveller was a man of kindness, as well as of observation. He offered to pay the postage himself; and spite of more reluctance on the girl's part than he could well understand, he did pay it, and gave her the letter. No sooner, however, was the postman's back turned, than she confessed that the proceeding had been concerted between her brother and herself—that the letter was empty—that certain signs on the direction conveyed all that she wanted to know—and that, as they could neither of them afford to pay the postage, they had devised this method of franking the intelligence desired. The traveller pursued his journey; and as he plodded over the Cumberland fells, he mused upon the badness of a system which drove people to such straits for means of correspondence, and defeated its own objects all the time. With most men, such musings would have ended before the close of the hour, but 'this man's name was Rowland Hill; and it was from this incident, and these reflections, that the whole scheme of penny postage was derived.'

Mr. Martin, of Birmingham, is informed that his intricate Essay will not be used by us, and has been reposted.

We have had the pleasure of receiving, from the Rev. John Layhe, the Seventeenth Report of the Ministry to the Poor in Manchester.'

The interesting letter on 'Popular Christianity,' by 'A Minister's Son,' the reply of Mr. Norrington, and the letter of a 'Foreign Republican,' will appear shortly.

The communication of J. D. N. has not proved insertable, but future articles may be.

'Exeter' will find that Mr. Newman, and some other theists, accept the ground of 'adaptation,' and he who offers it as a substitute for 'design' must consider their view in connection with it.

J. I., Dublin, is informed that before long we shall be able to issue the series he asks after. For what he now needs the Chambers' list is the best that he can consult.

As men are wisely wary of trusting their purses or their persons to other's keeping, much more should they refuse to trust their souls. T.

Mrs. C. H. Dexter will Lecture on September 15th, at John Street, on 'Reformation in Female Dress'—wearing herself the Bloomer Costume.

'The True Origin, Object, and Organisation of the Christian Religion, by Franeois Dupuis,' has been translated by Mr. Southwell. Dupuis' name is sufficient to attract all who are curious as to the historical character of Christianity.

The following is a copy of an advertisement:—'Evangelical Alliance; Infidelity prize essays. Royal 18mo, cloth, 3s. "The Shadow of Death," and "The Creed of Despair:—" two prize essays on Infidelity among the working classes, given by the Evangelical Alliance. By Charles Smith, printer, and Matthew Spears.'

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## PAMPHLETS OF OPPONENTS.\*

### VI.

HERE we have an excellent example of the good effect, and great benefit to the cause of truth, produced by campaigns of public lecturing and discussion. Attention is commanded, opposition, 'our opportunity,' is compelled, and the officials of Christianity are induced to come forward to state their own case and to expose its deficiencies of evidence or of moral dignity. 'The most dangerous enemies of established opinions,' says Hazlitt, 'are those who, by always defending them, call attention to their weak side.' Two clergymen of the established church, in consequence of Mr. Holyoake's lectures in the good town of Nottingham, advance to the rescue, and without directly professing to reply to *his* statements, bring forward what they can of apology for the Bible and Christian doctrine, and of denunciation and imputation against unbelievers; bear witness in a very satisfactory manner to the undeniable decrease of faith in this country; and evince alarm for their own congregations and parishioners, by whom we hope these two pamphlets will be carefully read.

There is positively not a single new argument of any sort in any part of Mr. Brooks's discourse; and those which he employs have been refuted and exposed so often, that a detailed repetition will be wearisome and useless to the readers of the *Reasoner*. After a passing blow at the Church of Rome, which of course he declares to be the Babylon of the Apocalypse, and the scarlet woman, &c., the reverend vicar asserts his belief, from the prevalence and increased boldness of infidelity, that this is 'the last time,' and that the second coming of Christ is at hand (pp. 1-5). Eighteen hundred years ago, or thereabouts, the Apostle John, or the author of the epistle which is attributed to him, said the same thing: 'Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now there are many antichrists: whereby we know that it is the last time' (1 John, c. ii., v. 18). So, notwithstanding Mr. Brooks's reliance on the 'sure word of prophecy,' he may possibly turn out to be equally misled by the signs of the times as the saint and apostle was, with regard to the near approach of the day of judgment, the millennium, or whatever it is that is expected.

Then we find some of the staple proofs (!) of the genuineness of the gospels, which, even if rigidly conclusive, would in no way increase the probability of their authenticity. We know nothing of the character or attainments of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which should lead us to believe that they would be more

\* A Discourse on Infidelity, by the Rev. J. W. Brooks, M.A., Vicar of St. Mary's, Nottingham. London: Wertheim and Co.

The Bible and Infidelity. Three Lectures delivered at the Assembly Rooms, Nottingham, by the Rev. T. Collisson, A.B., Curate of New Radford. Wertheim and Co.

careful in their narration of events than other writers of their time and of many succeeding centuries, during which miraculous stories were common and popular, and the use of pious frauds and fictions was avowed and defended by Christian saints and doctors. Leslie's argument of the four criteria has been examined in former numbers of the *Reasoner*: but in addition to the proofs of the fallacy of the criteria therein adduced, it may be mentioned, that in many Roman Catholic countries numerous memorials, such as crutches, wax models of eyes, and ears, and attested inscriptions and documents, will be found suspended in the churches in testimony to miraculous cures wrought by the relics of saints—in short, cases possessing all the four criteria, and which Mr. Brooks must either acknowledge to be pious frauds, or become a Papist at once, in obedience to miraculous evidence.

Our author next informs his congregation and readers of some objections which he has ascertained to be 'favourite' with unbelievers (p. 15). One of these 'favourite objections to the Bible' is, that it is 'the invention of priests, merely to promote priestcraft and kingcraft!' Mr. Brooks assures us that it is a well-known fact that bad and ambitious kings 'do not love and read the Bible;' and 'as to priestcraft,' says he, 'there is such a thing; go to Rome, to Romanists, and to Romanisers'—for be it understood that Mr. Brooks is one of the extreme Low Church party, and classes together 'Romanists, Tractarians, and all other worldly ministers;' and in another passage of his discourse laments over 'the existence and prevalence of infidels and scoffers and blasphemers, of Socinians, Papists, and Tractarians;' thus not sparing a large body of the most active, sincere, and well-intentioned ministers of his own church, merely on account of their differing with him and his party on some minor points of doctrine and discipline. After such an instance of feelings promoted by evangelical faith even within the fold of the church, what treatment can we outcasts and rebels expect?

Mr. Brooks asserts (p. 17), that 'infidels require us to believe things far more difficult' (than miracles); 'they deny, for example, that God created the universe; yet call on us to believe that matter is eternal, and originally possessed intellect, volition, and creative or miraculous power, *i. e.*, that dead, inert matter, did of itself spontaneously produce all sorts of organised animals and plants—man, also, with his noble intellect and soul' (p. 17). This is an error; for he says that he has 'just read statements substantially agreeing' with this in the 'Logic of Death,' 'written by that poor infidel Holyoake, who was lecturing here a few weeks since.' Nothing like this will be found in the 'Logic of Death.' That the atheist does consider matter to be eternal, is perfectly correct; and, for that very reason, no atheist could make use of such a term as that matter '*originally* possessed,' or '*originally* was'—whatever is eternal has no origin, beginning, or end. And what does Mr. Brooks mean by 'dead, inert matter?' How much longer is that extraordinary expression to be repeated? Dead, inert matter! Have theologians no eyes, no ears? Do not rivers run unceasingly? Do supernatural hands supply their sources, or compel their progress to the sea, or is it not rather the material properties of water that cause these vigorous actions? Do not the winds blow, and by natural and known causes? Air and water, then, are neither immaterial nor inactive, dead or inert. Are no changes in progress on the surface of the earth? does the sea not alter the coast, and time and weather change the aspect and structure of the mountains? Are earthquakes, in Mr. Brooks's opinion, the work of devils, or gods, or some other members of the supernatural family? or do they also furnish proofs that matter is not inert or inactive? Ascending to the

grander phenomena of nature, where or what is the supernatural motive power of the solar system? Is gravity a god, or may we, with Dr. Nichol, a Christian philosopher and author of the 'Architecture of the Heavens,' conclude that 'it is an ultimate property of matter?' Is electricity an immaterial or supernatural entity, or is it a property of matter? Dead, inert matter!

'Organised plants and animals, man also, with his noble intellect,' are not now at least produced by supernatural causes; and the atheist, without positively asserting that there *must* have been a beginning to life in this earth, argues that if a plant, an animal, or a man, can be produced at this time without supernatural interference, so also a first plant, a first animal, or a first man, may have been naturally produced in this earth under the right circumstances—circumstances which probably cannot occur in the present condition of our globe. Our difficulties, and our ignorance, are not in the least dispelled—but, on the contrary, complicated and increased—by the adoption of the ancient belief in a supernatural contriver and maker, who, after existing from eternity in absolute void and solitude, suddenly proceeded to create the universe out of nothing, or out of himself.

The Rev. Mr. Collisson, in his first lecture, makes use of the 'design' argument, and, like his friend the vicar, expatiates on the 'inertness' of matter as proving the existence of a God! What we have already said with regard to this point, will therefore apply to Mr. Collisson as well. In fact, Mr. Collisson's three lectures, occupying much more space, and making much more pretension to logical demonstration than Mr. Brooks's discourse, afford even more cases of groundless assertion. As a sample of the last-mentioned quality, we will take the peroration of his third lecture, 'on the causes of infidelity.' One of these causes he defines to be 'immorality of life,' and he exhorts the unbelievers among his audience in the following language:—'Do not then, you that are infidels, persist in your present unhappy and ruinous condition, but seek of God that new heart which you have reason to believe he will bestow on those that ask. Depend upon it, however sweet present indulgence and loose living may seem to some, there are no joys sin can yield equal to those of a good conscience, and a mind at peace with God. Be assured, indulgence in sensuality carries ruin with it, leaves a sting behind it, and will certainly terminate in misery,' &c.

The only excuse for this is, that it is so thoroughly and universally traditional among Christians, that we may well understand how it is that some of them become sincerely convinced of the substantial truth of this charge of immorality against unbelievers, though contradicted by facts of past and present history. Caricatures of us have been drawn by the priests in their weekly easels, the pulpits, and passed off as portraits. A false thing must be a bad thing, and cannot tend to make men wiser, better, or happier; a true thing, or any approximation to truth, cannot lead to evil of any species.

Mr. Collisson, in his first lecture, tries to prove the genuineness and authenticity of the Old and New Testaments, and certainly some of his arguments have to us at least the charm of novelty. For example (p. 13), 'The name Jove was that familiarly known among the ancients as the name of the Supreme Deity. It is remarkable how closely this approaches to the name Jehovah,' &c. 'In the heathen mythology, you find a great deal about the *exploits of Hercules*. Now in the early parts of Bible history, though we have no record of any such extraordinary and incredible achievements as are ascribed to Hercules, yet we have this statement plainly declaring the existence of such monstrous forms of the human

species: "THERE WERE GIANTS ON THE EARTH IN THOSE DAYS," Gen. vi., 4.\* Mr. COLLISON adds, 'THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SAMSON, TOO, MIGHT FORM THE GROUND-WORK OF THE EXaggerated exploits attributed to Hercules.' Is any further comment necessary? We will just observe that the second lecture is on the Divine Authority of the Bible, that its style is in no way superior to the extracts we have already made, and that at the end of each lecture there is an appendix containing objections which were made in the Assembly Rooms and replied to by Mr. COLLISON.'

E. B.

### A SUMMARY OF THE THEOLOGY OF PLATO.

THAT there is but one God; that we ought to love and serve Him, and to endeavour to resemble Him in holiness and righteousness; that this God rewards humility and punishes pride.

That the true happiness of man consists in being united to God, and his only misery in being separated from Him.

That the soul is mere darkness unless it be illuminated by God; that men are incapable even of praying well, unless God teaches them that prayer which alone can be useful to them.

That there is nothing solid and substantial but piety; that this is the source of virtues; and that it is the gift of God.

That it is better to die than to sin.

That we ought to be continually learning to die, and yet to endure life, in obedience to God.

That it is a crime to hurt our enemies, and to revenge ourselves for the injuries we have received.

That it is better to suffer wrong than to do it.

That God is the sole cause of good, and cannot be the cause of evil, which always proceeds only from our disobedience, and the ill use we make of our liberty.

That self-love produces that discord and division which reign among men, and is the cause of their sins; that the love of our neighbours, which proceeds from the love of God, as its principle, produces that sacred union which makes families, republics, and kingdoms happy.

That the world is nothing but corruption; that we ought to fly from it, and to join ourselves to God, who alone is our health and life; and that while we live in this world we are surrounded by enemies, and have a continual combat to endure, which requires, on our part, resistance without intermission; and that we cannot conquer unless God or angels come to our help.

That the Word (*Logos*) formed the world, and rendered it visible; that the knowledge of the Word makes us live happily here below, and that thereby we obtain felicity after death.

That the soul is immortal; that the dead shall rise again; that there shall be a final judgment, both of the righteous and of the wicked, where men shall appear only with their virtues or vices, which shall be the occasion of their eternal happiness or misery.—Published in *Foxton's Popular Christianity*.

\* All these capitals are in the original.



### Examination of the Press.

**BAPTIST RIOTS IN JAMAICA.**—Spanish Town, Jamaica, has been the scene of considerable excitement, owing to the attempts of a number of the Baptist congregations to obtain possession of, or to destroy, the dwelling-house and chapel of the Rev. J. M. Phillippo. It appears that during an absence of Mr. Phillippo in England, some years ago, a Mr. Dowson was sent to occupy his place, who took advantage of his position to secure to himself the affections of a large body of the people. On Mr. Phillippo's return he expected to obtain possession of the mission-premises as his right, *but as the people had built the chapel and house they imagined themselves possessed of an absolute control over the property, and wished to give it to Dowson.* The matter was then thrown into the courts of law, and ultimately came before the Court of Chancery; it was decided in Mr. Phillippo's favour, inasmuch as, *though congregations have a right to elect, they have no right to depose, a pastor. The people, in their simplicity, neither could nor would comprehend this; they determined to consider their opinion as the law, and to enforce it vi et armis.* Accordingly on December 31, 1850, a large multitude riotously assembled in the chapel, and from thence proceeded to the house, where they began to cut down the trees, break the banisters, knock out the windows, and give other decisive proofs that they would do what they liked with their own. Mr. Phillippo stood his ground with that intrepidity for which he was conspicuous in the days of slavery, and sent for the magistrates. A number of persons were seized for the riot and depredation, and were brought to trial before Mr. Justice Stephenson on June 13th, 1851. The trial lasted two days. A verdict of guilty was returned, and though their offence was punishable with transportation, yet, in consideration of their comparative ignorance of law, the judge passed a mild sentence. The ringleader is to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour in the general penitentiary for twelve months, and the rest for nine months, with the exception of one, whose term is only three months. This sentence was altogether unexpected; a scene of mourning, lamentation, and woe was the result. Crowds followed to the prison, and from thence, on sudden impulse, rushed to the mission-house. The work of destruction began furiously; all that could be destroyed in a short time, both of the house and its furniture, was destroyed. The military were called out—the riot act was read; and at the time the paper left from which we derive our information (the *Kingston Morning Journal*) the whole town was in a state of alarm. *These events cannot but distress every Christian mind. Mr. Phillippo himself must deeply feel them. Many, of course, will say, why did he not leave, and thus prevent such collisions?* But we have no doubt that, in the long run, the peace and prosperity of churches will be best secured by the present enforcement of the law, however disagreeable the lesson or the process of teaching.—*From a correspondent of the Bristol Mercury.* [W. C. would like to know the Rev. Mr. Fleming's opinion of the conduct of the Rev. Mr. Phillippo, when judged by the following views of the Sermon on the Mount: Matt. v., 9, 39, 40, 44; vi., 25-34. Also, whether the scenes described may be taken as evidence of missionary success?]

**MR. RUSKIN'S RELIGIOUS STRICTURES.**—Vital as is the religious question, it seems with Mr. Ruskin to overweigh every other. We find his notions on this head pushed to an excess: he insists on faith, as if it were more important in the pursuit of Art than in any other following of life; when, in fact, it is equally requisite in all. It is most dangerous to dogmatise on these things as our author does, as the intellect cannot be proved to depend on the moral faculty, and it is

possible for an infidel to have far greater understanding than many a learned and religious man; whence it would result that his power would be much greater in Science or Art, supposing his mind applied to their pursuit. We admit that to be the highest state of man which combines the most intellect and the most religion; we do not allow there can be no true intellect in Art where there is no religion. The real question is that of the result of works—whether they tend to do good or evil. We believe that a work may do the greatest harm, and yet be perfect in itself as the result of intellect. How many good and beautiful ideas, how much of true poetic feeling that finds something to love in all nature and good Art, have been exposed to ridicule by being forced to an absurd result? The truth never suffers more than from those who in their enthusiasm so describe and apply it, as to make it seem a parody on itself: and if we, sympathising with Mr. Ruskin, yet feel alarmed at his dogmata, what must be the result with those who think his views altogether wrong? Ridicule, nothing but ridicule, scorn flung into the face of divine truth, because the Author will exaggerate her features. We say vital religion is of great benefit in the following of Art—Mr. Ruskin that there can be no true Art without it. Let him mark the difference. Ours is an opinion that may be respected as such; perhaps may influence even those who did not agree with it. Mr. Ruskin's is a dogma which many can disprove. Both statements arise from the same principle, but which is likely most to serve the cause of Truth?—*Architectural Quarterly Review*, July 1st.

ARCHDEACON HARE'S MISSION OF THE COMFORTER.—'It is grievously common among divines to close their eyes against the light of conscience, and against that idea of justice and right, which is one of the pole-stars of the human mind, and to pare and screw down the notion of justice into accordance with the scheme of propositions which they have built up into their theological system. It has been contended indeed by many, that we can have no correct conception of justice, except what we derive from the Bible: so fond are men of pampering their sloth and self-sufficiency by assuming that they have the only key to all knowledge in their hands, and that everything else is naught. But, without stopping to argue against this debasing fallacy which all history, and philosophy and poetry, and the laws of all nations, refute, or to show how the reverse is implied in every page of the Bible itself, speaking, as it everywhere does, to the reason and the conscience, it is sufficient to call to mind that sublime question, "Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?" that is, "Shall not He do what shall be recognised to be right by man's reason and conscience?" This question, be it remembered, is one which man was permitted to ask; nor do we read that it was regarded as presumptuous, but, on the contrary, that the Judge of all the earth vouchsafed to give ear to it, and to justify his ways.'—Note 2, p. 370. [So Archdeacon Hare does not object to our putting the God of the Bible on his trial, and judging him by the natural 'idea of justice and right.' A valuable concession.—E. B.]

DOGMATISM.—Maintain a constant watch at all times against a dogmatic spirit: fix not your assent to any proposition in a firm and unalterable manner till you have some firm and unalterable ground for it, and till you have arrived at some clear and sure evidence—till you have turned the proposition on all sides, and searched the matter through and through, so that you cannot be mistaken. And even where you think you have full grounds for assurance, be not too early nor too frequent in expressing this assurance in too peremptory and positive a manner, remembering that human nature is always liable to mistake.—*Watts*.

### The Conversion of Anastasius to the Mohammedan Religion.

THERE had arrived at Pera a foreigner, whom I shall call Eugenius. His ostensible object was to acquire the ancient lore of the East, in return for which he most liberally dealt out the new creed of the West. I cannot better describe him than as the antipode to Father Ambrogio. For as the one was a missionary of a society for the propagation of belief, so was the other an emissary of a sect for the diffusion of disbelief. He meditated, indeed, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but with the view to prove more scientifically the fatuity of all things holy. Reason, philosophy, and universal toleration were the only objects of his reverence; and some of his tenets, which I picked up by the way, had in them a something plausible to my mind, and, if not true, seemed to my inexperience *ben trovati*. He conceived that there might exist offences between man and man, such as adultery, murder, &c., of a blacker die than the imperfect performance of certain devout practices—eating pork steaks in Lent included; and, above all, he thought that whatever number of crimes a man might, on using his utmost diligence, crowd in the short span of this life, they still might possibly be atoned for in the next by only five hundred thousand million of centuries (he would not abate a single second) of the most execrating torture; though this period was absolutely nothing compared with eternity. As to his other tenets, they were too heinous to mention.

His father Ambrogio was aware that Eugenius broached such abominable doctrines he had introduced me to him in the quality of drogueman, or rather of cicerone; and the tone in which I was received might have made the father suspect that all was not right. But the father's range of intellectual vision extended not further than his own nose, and that was a snub one.

'It was you quibbling, sophistical Greeks, cried Eugenius, laughing, 'who, proud, at the commencement of the Christian era, of your recently imported gnosticism, perverted by its mystic doctrine the simple tenets of Christianity. It was you who, ever preferring the im-

probable and the marvellous to the natural and the probable, have contended for taking in a literal, and therefore in an absurd sense, a thousand expressions which in the phraseology of the East were only meant as figurative and symbolical; and it was you who have set the baneful example of admitting, in religious matters, the most extraordinary deviations from the course of nature and from human experience, on such partial and questionable evidence, as, in the ordinary affairs of man, and in a modern court of justice, would not be received on the most common and probable occurrence.'

Father Ambrogio, who conceived that every reflection upon the Greeks must be in favour of the Romans, was delighted with this speech, and, as he went away, earnestly recommended to me to treasure up in my memory all the sagacious sayings of the wise man whom I had the happiness to serve.

But it was not long before he changed his mind. The very next day, when I called on Eugenius, I found padre Ambrogio in most angry discussion with him about the doctrine of divine clemency, which the friar could not abide. Eugenius at last was obliged to say, in his laughing way, that since the father appeared so incurably anxious for endless punishment, all he could do for him was to pray that, by a single exception in his favour, he at least might be damned to all eternity. Father Ambrogio, who never laughed, and who hated Eugenius the more for always laughing, upon this speech left the room; but the next time he met me alone he very seriously cautioned me against one who, he was sure, must be a devil incarnate.

'If so,' thought I, 'he preaches against his own trade; and his principal is little obliged to him for making his dominion a mere leasehold, instead of a perpetuity.' Meanwhile I resolved not to be too sure, and, when Eugenius took off his clothes, watched whether I could perceive the cloven foot. Nothing appearing at all like it, and his disposition seeming gentle, obliging, and humane, I began to be fond of his company—until, from liking the man, I unfor-

tunately by degrees came not to dislike some parts of the doctrine of which he was the apostle.

Eugenius differed in one respect from his brethren of the new school. While they wished to subvert all former systems *in toto*, ere they began to re-edify according to their new plan, he, on the contrary, only contended for the appeal to reason on points of internal faith, and urged, in external practices, the propriety of conforming to the established worship; and this, not from selfish but philanthropic motives: 'for,' said he, 'while the vulgar retain a peculiar belief, they will close their eyes and hearts against whatever practical good those wish to do them who join not in their creed; and should they, in imitation of their betters, give up some of their idle tenets—unable immediately, like those they imitate, to replace the checks of superstition by the powers of reason—they will only from bad lapse into worse, let loose the reins to their passions, and exchange errors for crimes.'

Now, in conformity to this doctrine of my master, what could be clearer than that it behoved me, where the Koran was become the supreme law—as a quiet orderly citizen, zealous in support of the establishment—with all possible speed to become a Mohammedan? Should there happen to be any personal advantage connected with this public duty; should my conforming to it open the door to places and preferments from which I otherwise must remain shut out; should it raise me from the rank of the vanquished to that of the victors, and enable me, instead of being treated with contempt by the Turkish beggar, to elbow the Greek prince, was that my fault? or could it be a motive to abstain from what was right, that it was also profitable?

The arguments appeared to me so conclusive, that I had only been watching for an opportunity to throw off the contemptuous appellation of Nazarene, and to become associated to the great aristocracy of Islamism, some time before the fair Esmé lent the peculiar grace of her accent to its Allah, Illah, Allah; and though, for the credit of my sincerity, I could wish my conversion not exactly to have taken place at the particular moment at which the light of truth happened to shine upon me, yet,

all things considered, I thought it wiser not to quibble about punctilios, than to be sewed in a sack, and served up for breakfast to some Turkish shark.

Thus it was that the doctrine of pure reason ended in making me a Mohammedan; but with a pang I quitted for the strange sound of Selim my old and beloved name of Anastasius, given me by my father, and so often and so sweetly repeated by my Helena.

I was scarce a Mohammedan skin deep, when I again met padre Ambrogio, whom since my affair with Esmé I had entirely lost sight of, and who knew not my apostasy.

'Son,' said he in a placid tone, 'we are all at times prone to passion. I myself, meek as you now see me, have had my unguarded moments; but it is impossible that you should not wish to achieve the glorious work so well begun. Suppose, therefore, we resume our spiritual exercises. You are already so far advanced in the right road, that we cannot fail ultimately to make you an exemplary Roman Catholic.'

'Father,' answered I, 'what may ultimately happen it is not in man to foresee: meantime, since we met last, another trifling impediment has arisen to my embracing the Latin creed. I am become a Moslem.''

At this unlooked-for obstacle, father Ambrogio started back full three yards. 'Holy Virgin!' exclaimed he, 'how could you make such a mistake?'

Not caring to assign the true cause; 'I wanted,' said I, 'to secure in the next world a little harem of black-eyed girls.'

At this speech father Ambrogio fetched a deep sigh; and began to muse, looking alternately at his habit and at mine. 'Well!' said he, after a pause; 'at least you no longer are a Greek, and that is something;' and hereupon he departed—wondering, I suppose, where in his paradise, Mohammed meant to dispose of the angels whose eyes were blue.

I never was very ambitious of learning, but my new godfather, a formal Turkish grey-beard, could not brook my total ignorance of my new religion. 'You are not here among Scheyis,' said he, 'who, under the name of Mohammedans, live the lives of yaoors, drink wine as freely as we swallow opium, and make as little scruple of having in their

possession paintings of pretty faces, as if at the day of judgment they were not to find souls for all those bodies of their own creating. You are — Allah be praised! — among strict and orthodox Sunnees; and however an old believer may have had time to forget his creed, a young neophyte should have it at his fingers' ends.

So I had to learn my catechism afresh. Great indeed was my inclination to expostulate: but all I could obtain was to be provided with a teacher who, for my twenty paras a lesson, should put me in the way of passing over the bridge Seerath as speedily as possible. And this I was promised.

Nothing, therefore, could exceed my surprise, when in walked the gravest of the whole grave body of doctors of law — the very pink and quintessence of true believers; one who would not miss saying his namaz regularly four times a day, three hundred and sixty days in the year, for all the treasures of the Devas: who, to obtain the epithet of the hafeez, had learnt his whole Koran by heart unto the last stop; and who, not satisfied with praying to God like other people, had linked himself to a set of dancing derwishes, for the sole purpose of addressing the Deity with more effect in a sugar-loaf cap, and spinning round the room like a top: — a personage who, in a devout fit, would plump down upon his knees in the midst of the most crowded street, without turning his head round before he had finished the last reekath of his orison, if all Constantinople were trembling in an earthquake; who, considering all amusements as equally heinous, made no difference between a game of chess or mangala and illicit attentions to one's own great-grandmother, and once, in his devout fury, with his enormous chaplet positively demolished Karagheuz in the midst of all his drollery: a personage who, at the end of the Ramadan, looked like a walking spectre, and the very last time of this fast absolutely doubled its length, only for having snuffed up with pleasure, before the hours of abstinence were over, the fumes of a kiebab on its passage out of a cook-shop: a personage who had an absolute horror of all representations of the human figure — those of St. Mark on the Venetian sequin only excepted: a personage, in fine, who al-

ready was surnamed in his own district the wely or saint; and whom all his neighbours were dying to see dead, only that they might hang their rags round his grave, and so get cured of the ague.

When this reverend moollah first made his appearance, his face was still bedewed with tears of sympathy, occasioned by a most heart-rending scene of domestic woe, which his charitable hand had just assuaged. In an adjoining street he had found, stretched out on the bare pavement, a whole miserable family — father, mother, brothers, sisters, together with at least a dozen children of tender age — in a state of complete starvation. The very description of such a piteous sight harrowed up my soul. Lest, however, the holy man should incur a suspicion of having been betrayed into a weakness so reprehensible as that of pity for the human species — for which he felt all the contempt it deserved, and which he never presumed to solace under any of the visitations inflicted by Providence — I should add that the wretched objects of his present compassion were of that less reprobated sort, the canine species! They belonged to those troops of unowned dogs which the Turks of Constantinople allow to live in their streets on the public bounty, in order to have the pleasure of seeing them bark at the Christians, whom their Frank dress betrays. To these, and other beings of the irrational genus, were confined the benefactions of my tutor; but if his own species had few obligations to acknowledge from him, he was recorded as having purchased the liberty of three hundred and fifty canary birds in cages, granted pensions to the baker and butcher for the maintenance of fifty cats, and left at least a dozen dogs, whom he found on the *pavé*, handsomely provided for in his will.

Nosooner was my venerable instructor comfortably seated on his heels in the angle of my sofa, than, looking around him with an air of complacency, as if he liked my lodgings, he told me, to my infinite satisfaction, that, provided he only took his station there for two hours every day, he pledged himself before the end of the first year to instruct me thoroughly in all the diversities of the four orthodox rituals — the Hanefy, Schafey, Hanbaly, and Maleky; together with all that belonged to the ninety-

nine epithets of the Deity, represented by the ninety-nine beads of the chaplet. In the space of another twelvemonth he ventured to hope that he might go over with me the principal difference between the two hundred and eighty most canonical mufessirs or commentators on the Koran, as well as examine the two hundred and thirty-five articles of the creed, concerning which theologians disagree; and in the third year of our course he promised to enable me completely to refute all the objections which the Alewys and other dissenters made to the Sunnee creed; and to give me a general idea of the tenets of the seventy-two leading heretical sects, from that of Ata-hakem-Mookanna, or the one-eyed prophet with the golden mask, to Khand-Hassan the fanatic who eat pork and drank wine in the public marketplace like any Christian: so as, through dint of so much diligence, on the fourth and last year to have nothing to do but to go over the whole again, and imprint it indelibly on my memory. By way of a little foretaste of the method of disputation in which he promised to instruct me, he took up one of the controverted points; first raised his own objections against it; and then—as he had an indubitable right to do with his undisputed property—again completely overset them by the irresistible force of his arguments; after which, having entirely silenced his adversary, he rose, equally proud of the acuteness of his own rhetoric, and charmed with the sagacity with which I had listened.

The truth is, I had fallen asleep; for which reason, when I suddenly awoke on the din of his argumentation ceasing, I shook my head with a profound air, and by way of showing how much in earnest I meant to be, with a very wise look said I could not give my unqualified assent until I heard both sides of the question. Thus far I had heard neither.

This determination rather surprised my doctor, who seemed to have relied on my faculty of implicit credence. 'Hear both sides of the question!' exclaimed he, in utter astonishment. 'Why, that is just the way never to come to a conclusion, and to remain in suspense all the days of one's life? Wise men first adopt an opinion, and then learn to defend it. For my part I make it a rule never to hear but one side; and

so do all who wish to settle their belief.'

The thing had never occurred to me before; but I thought it had in it a something plausible, which at any rate made me resolve not to lengthen the four years' course by idle doubts. Accordingly in the three first lessons I agreed to every thing the doctor said or meant to say, even before he opened his mouth, and only wondered how things so simple, for instance, as the Prophet's ascent to the third heaven on the horse Borak, with a peacock's tail and a woman's face (I mean the horse), could be called in question. Unfortunately, when in the fourth lesson the moollah asserted that Islamism was destined ultimately to pervade the whole globe, a preposterous longing seized me to show my learning. I asked how that could be, when, as Eugenius had asserted, an uninterrupted day of several months put the fast of the Ramadan wholly out of the question near the poles? This difficulty, which the doctor could not solve, of course put him in a great rage. He reddened, rubbed his forehead, repeated my query, and at last told me in a violent perspiration, that if I mixed travellers' tales with theology, he must give up my instruction.

I was too happy to take him at his word; instantly paid what I owed for the lessons received; and begged henceforth to remain in contented ignorance. Lest, however, I should appear petulant to my godfather, I went and desired him to find me a moollah that was reasonable.

'A moollah that is reasonable!' exclaimed an old gentleman present, who happened to belong to the order himself. 'Why, young man, that is a most unreasonable request. The Koran itself declares the ink of the learned to be equal in value to the blood of martyrs; and where will a single drop be shed in disputation, if all agree to be reasonable? But come,' added he, laughing, 'I will undertake, without a fee, to teach you in one word all that is necessary to appear a thorough-bred Moslem; and if you doubt my receipt, you may even get a fethwa of the Muffy, if you please, to confirm its efficacy. Whenever you meet with an infidel, abuse him with all your might, and no one will doubt you are yourself a staunch believer.' I promised to follow the advice.—*Anastasius; or, Memoirs of a Greek*, pp. 140-9.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## THE REPLY OF MR. NORRINGTON.

SIR,—My motive for writing to you on a late occasion was not to engage in any controversy, but simply to affirm what I conceived to be the truth, and to show that a believer in God and in the goodness of Christ need not necessarily be superstitious, and that he may be the friend of progress and of the utmost freedom of inquiry.

I am not committed to any opinions, for, as reason and experience enlarge, we know not what new views may break in upon our minds to prove the futility of former conceptions. If 'M. A.,' or Mr. Chilton, had said anything to convince me that I maintained a false position, I should be ready to record the change of sentiment.

In my letter I contended that it appeared to me that you judged of Christianity by modern theology, which theology is not supported by Christ or his apostles. I contended that orthodoxy and Catholicism are not consistent Christianity, and that the morality of Christ was pure and heavenly.

My views respecting these points are unchanged, but some remarks of 'M. A.'s' and Mr. Chilton's deserve notice. 'Goodness and virtue,' says 'M. A.,' 'are irrespective of Jesus; therefore we cannot destroy these qualities by any objection to him.' It is true that they are irrespective of Jesus, as well as of every other teacher; but this is not a good reason why we shall not cherish his memory, and identify him to a great extent with those noble qualities which he so well developed. To me, and I hope to many others, Christ is the best representative of moral and spiritual excellence; and although the destruction of the man would not be the destruction of the virtue and goodness associated with him, yet surely their efficacy would be impaired and their progress retarded. Men and measures, in some degree, always go together; and when the man is found defective, the measure suffers suspicion. Prove Cobden selfish, and you injure the principle of free trade; prove Blanco White capricious, and you injure rationalism; prove Paine a drunkard, and you injure deism; prove Holyoake dogmatic, and you injure free thought. Believing this, I cannot behold the character of Christ impugned without protesting.

'The sayings, teachings, and actions of Christ are about devils, hell-fire, and a God dooming the vast majority of his creatures to eternal torments?' ('M. A.'). Wherever the words devil and hell are found in the Testament, they are capable of rational interpretation. As 'M. A.' undoubtedly professes to be a rationalist as well as myself, he is equally bound to accept the meaning most consistent with good sense and probability—and, in fact, he has no right to take those absurd interpretations which in his heart he utterly despised, and which have made religion contemptible. Does he not know that liberal Christians, especially Unitarians, have long discarded the popular superstitions connected with this highly-figurative language, and that they have shown that these words, when viewed in their proper light and with reference to the time and place in which they were first employed, have nothing in them but what may be explained on the principles of natural religion and sound philosophy?

'Are the Gospels a proper report of Jesus?' In the main, I should say, 'Yes. 'But,' it may be asked, 'where are we to distinguish between the true and the

false?' I candidly confess I do not know. Every man must judge for himself, and be persuaded in his own mind. But observe the distinction, mentioned in my former letter, between moral truth and historic relation—the first essentially and necessarily true, the last the subject of doubt and evidence. The writers were, of course, subject to all the influences which affect the mind; and as they lived in an age when every extraordinary natural event was attributed to miraculous agency, and when belief in supernaturalism and preternaturalism was common, the Gospels must undoubtedly, with all other ancient books, have considerable latitude of interpretation. Strauss hits the point when he says, 'We often take that to be true history which is only an idea.' In all books, even of modern date, there is a mixture of truth and error. The objection that because some part of an historical detail is improbable or impossible therefore the whole is untrue, may be brought against every historic work. If my friendly opponents were to allow that Plutarch, Rollin, and Gibbon were true, I should not by this admission suppose that they pledged themselves to every one of their statements, or read them without just discrimination. Let me and others be judged with equal charity when we say the Gospels will give us a true idea of Christ.

'M. A.' affects not to understand what I mean by the spirit of a thing independent of the letter. An occasional severity in Howard or Oberlin would not destroy the characteristic of their lives—benevolence. Testimony and tradition, all but universal, proclaim the goodness and purity of Jesus; and thus, in our discrimination of what is recorded of him, the spirit of the man should influence our judgment. I must request 'M. A.' to apply to Mr. Chilton to relieve his obtusity, who says, 'The spirit in which my first letter is dictated is all that can be desired;' and yet Mr. C. comes forth as the objector to the letter. The distinction between spirit and letter is much better perceived than described; and it does not follow, because we are not able to define a thing, that we cannot appreciate it.

It would be expecting too much from you, Mr. Editor, to suppose that you could afford space for a discussion as to the effect which the advocacy of new doctrines and truths has at first upon mankind. 'M. A.' altogether denies that the promulgation of good produces temporary confusion and disorder. Assertion against assertion is valueless. In this matter the history of all reforms must be our teacher; and to these I appeal for the confirmation of my statements. If the ten commandments had not been objected to, nor any moral code, you would not now have to fight for free thought and the Charter. Science, politics, morality, religion, can all number their martyrs.

'M. A.' thinks it 'unfair to ask for judgment of the Bible and Christ in the same impartial manner that we judge of other documents and characters, because *everybody* is offended when it is attempted.' Certainly a very poor excuse! Because the mass of professing Christians are bibliolators, the book must not be estimated according to its intrinsic value! To quote from that book, 'The fear of man worketh a snare.' It is evidently unfair to say a thing is worth less than it is, because others say it is worth more than it is. The argument goes to strengthen the position I first took—that freethinkers are too apt to be led by the accidents and corruptions of Christianity from the consideration of the thing itself.

I think that if my opponents had kept the thought in their mind that my letter was written with peculiar reference to the orthodox opinions respecting religion

\* 'M. A.' can here see the difference between spirit and letter. Which must I take?



and Christ, they would have spared some of their remarks as inapplicable and unnecessary. Modern theology is the caricature of Christianity.

'What is consistent Christianity?' (Mr. C.) It certainly does not consist in opinions, but rather in the new commandment of Christ—'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another.' To me it appears independent of dogmas, and, in one sense, even of Christ. Christianity is the catholic, the universal. 'The absolute ground of everything is unknown,' says Coleridge; and what can be strictly comprehended and described must be less than the mind that can comprehend and describe it. I may as well ask Mr. C., What is the nature of all the moral qualities? He can give me a definition that shall only be partly true, and with that we must rest contented. Mahometans, like Christians, are divided into many sects. Is there then no such thing as Mahometanism? In all cases of conscience every man is his own master, and if he be happy and satisfied with himself, and faithful to his own idea, he performs his part in creation.

HENRY NORRINGTON.

### THE POPULAR CHRISTIANITY.

#### LETTER FIRST.

SIR,—Having just bought and read No. 268 of your journal, and finding in it statements which appear to me objectionable, because relatively and absolutely untrue—in the absence of other answers expressing the same sentiments as mine own, I should feel glad should you think my communication worthy a column for your readers.

I would wish to state, that I have never before offered my thoughts to the public—that I would have it remembered, it may be owing to the advocate rather than to the absence of truth in the conclusions advocated, that there should be imperfections and not so clear elucidation and forcible defence of religious truth as the subject admits. I would that others with larger outfit and opportunity more frequently defended their views in your publication.

To the monotheist, truth must exist in the absolute mind; and the guarantee is, that this mind has revealed some portions of it.

I doubt not your character merits the admiration it has called forth. I am well aware your moral attainments are highly regarded by some wise and pious men. Others will doubtless mourn, since your energies, perseverance, and talents are not directed to the promulgation of religion. Should you possess the truth, you are better employed; should you not, your endeavours will but brighten, or at least hasten on for the multitude, that intellectual daylight which has doubtless burst upon a favoured few.

Should God exist, you cannot but be a 'co-worker;' for, to me, He even maketh all things to praise him, to be productive of happiness—murder, deceit, yea excess of every kind—how much more your efforts! Should any Christian object to this let him read, who bows to it, the passage—'He maketh the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of that wrath,' which would not praise him, 'doth he restrain.' To the philosophic Christian we must say the intention of the letter does not embrace the proof, which might be given, of this which may appear to some an unwarrantable statement.

I would not that too much sympathy were expressed and felt at the apparent prospect of your 'lost condition.' The providence of God, founded in wisdom and justice—or in mercy, comprehending both—is a much wiser government than an unworthy fear of hell or a selfish hope of heaven would reveal. I would remind

some, earnest but comparatively thoughtless upon this point, how to gain the wisest answer to this question of damnation and salvation, and refer them to that answer, breathing of divinity always fresh from the hills of Nazareth, to the question, 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' 'strive to enter in at the straight gate,' &c. Christ well knew the paramount necessity of 'working out your own salvation'—personal, painful effort; he well knew that he who had 'endured hardness as a good soldier'—the synonyme with 'strive to enter in,' &c.—finds such *satisfactory answer in the work*, through God's ordination, that any professed revelation of earth, or heaven, or hell could not frighten or gainsay. Christ has yet to teach us, or rather we have yet to learn, that he whose mind is deep rooted in the sea of truth, and especially consecrated truth, makes

'The pillar'd firmament appear like rottenness,  
And earth's basis built on stubble!

Under any circumstances, Christianity points to a common focus in which the Christian and the sceptic alike might meet; and were it not for the common distrust of truth but too manifest with the orthodox believer and unbeliever, it would, I think, be more clearly seen by both. I mean the morality of man. I mean the union of hearts beating with manly and generous sentiments strong in virtue and intelligence, and 'making the angels of heaven to rejoice' over many sinners, repenting of the unworthy and the base, and issuing through the gates of sorrow and remorse to the joys of heroic and manly minds. One sinner born anew to man is a sight only less glorious than the 'new birth' of Christ's 'children of the highest.'

It is not now our object through your journal to address your readers on this subject; let it now suffice to remark that a more peaceful, elevated strife—war, if you prefer the term—might, by enlarged experience, &c., open our mutual perceptions of things divinely human, and perhaps through them we should tempt the morning air of heaven, which might surprise our wondering reverence into a yet more vigorous and healthy glow of things divinely holy.

I feel I must apologise for not keeping to the spirit of my text. I opened by declaring I conceived objections to statements in your journal, and have inadvertently slipped into other congenial strains. I approve of motives where I do not coincide with opinions. I admire mistaken men who do not appear to me to teach the truth. I am sorry there is much I differ with in the three letters of this number, and that my objections to the rationalism—not to reason itself—of the third should be as numerous as they are to the spurious orthodoxy of the first. I would rather, sir, they had been concentrated in your own production, and perhaps I may expect your thoughts in dealing with the third, supposing my answers may involve to yourself unsatisfactory arguments. I feel I am claiming too much attention to state what it is I object to, and the reasons, in one number; and will therefore confine myself to the former, and, with your sanction, will take an early opportunity of dealing with the latter.

In letter one, it may startle some of your readers that my first objection should be to your title, as 'the modern apostle of atheism.' I do not so consider you. I object, secondly, to the affirmation that you oppose merely 'the opinions and practices of men,' and not Christianity as taught to be so by a *great majority* of evangelical ministers, who dare not many of them philosophise their own opinions—hence bring discredit upon Christianity. And, thirdly, to the explanation of God as Creator. Points which you have answered it is needless I should dwell upon.

In letter two (your answer), my first objection is to what appears to me your

partial and narrowed view of the laws affecting the human understanding. To the bold statement I have heard you make, that belief is a matter of evidence simply—that a just, satisfactory, forcible, and truthful appeal to the intellect, *satisfactory to any really healthy mind*, is sufficient, independent of the state of the moral, not to speak of the religious, feelings. Secondly, to your idea of the eternity of matter, at least if intimate in anything like its present form. Thirdly, to your idea of the self-existent, independent power of nature; also to the inference you draw, that of self-action. Carlyle's quotation, with great deference to his talents, I think erroneous and injurious. It is a nobler thought, demonstrable, to view an Almighty Creator, and not an almighty manufacturer of the universe.

With your rational correspondent I am at fault—firstly, that he should say, not only 'in attempting to destroy Christianity;' but had he said you were actually destroying the name and recollection of Christ from off the earth, I then object to the statement that 'you must remember you are destroying all the goodness and virtue which it embraces, as well as its supposed evils.' Also to the reasons he gives for his belief in God, as being unsatisfactory; and think there are better discovered and to be given. He represents the Protestant bodies as not acknowledging the right of private judgment; and that a belief in the doctrines of depravity, the trinity, &c., naturally and necessarily lead to the Church of Rome, which I think a mistake. How he totally misunderstands the commonest teachings of orthodoxy, by representing it as characterised by an enunciation of a doctrine of the wickedness of human reason. Lastly, I am at fault with him in his representations of Christ as a teacher.

Should any of your correspondents think I ought to have answered objections in stating them, I would remind him that these are subjects not well, if hastily, answered—by me, at least. Were it otherwise, I would gladly have done so.

A MINISTER'S SON.

[The publication of this letter may be taken by our correspondent as an answer of our willingness that he shall complete his development of his views of Popular Christianity.—Ed.]

#### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Sept. 21st [7½], Samuel Kydd, 'Society in France, and its Social Evils.' Sept. 23rd, [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

Hall of Science, City Road.—(Closed for alteration.)

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Sept. 21st, [8], P. W. Perfitz, 'Mormonism.'

British Coffee Rooms, Edgeware Road.—Sept. 21st [7], Henry T. Long, 'The Poetry of Democracy: "The Purgatory of Suicides."'

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Arcopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

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## Our Open Page.

THE *New York Tribune* has the following:—How TO DRAW THE SINNERS.—Several years ago we were a resident of North-Western Louisiana, near the confines of Texas. The people there as a general thing were not much given for religion. An itinerant preacher happened to go along in the neighbourhood during the dearth of religion, and set about repairing the walls of Zion in good earnest. But his success was poor. Not over half a dozen could be got together at his Sunday meetings. Determined, however, to create an interest before leaving the neighbourhood, he procured printed handbills, and had them posted up in every conspicuous place in the district, which read to the following effect:—‘Religious Notice.—Rev. Mr. Blaney will preach next Sunday, in Dempsey’s-grove, at 10 o’clock a.m., and at 4 p.m., Providence permitting. Between the services, the preacher will run his sorrel mare, Julia, against any nag that can be trotted out in this region, for a purse of 500 dollars.’—This had the desired effect. People flocked from all quarters, and the anxiety to see the singular preacher was even greater than the excitement following the challenge. He preached an eloquent sermon in the morning, and after dinner he brought out his mare for the race. The purse was made up by five or six of the planters, and an opposing nag produced. The preacher rode his little sorrel, and won the day, amid the deafening shouts, screams, and yells of the delighted people. The congregation all remained to the afternoon service, and at its close more than 200 joined the church; some from motives of sincerity, some for the novelty of the thing, some from excitement, and some because the preacher was a good fellow. The finale of the affair was as flourishing a society as could be found in the whole region thereabouts.

There is a book just published worth perusal—it is a novel in two vols., called ‘John Drayton, the early life of a Liverpool Engineer,’ and is a well-intentioned book, I think, although the author does try to convey to his readers a sort of impression that all Chartists beat their wives, and that all irreligious men are immoral, superstitious, and unhappy. Still he really does seem to think that it is so, or ought to be so; and it is gratifying to see that people are beginning to be conscious of the large amount of unbelief among the intelligent and educated labouring men, and to be alarmed at it. The author mentions the *Reasoner* several times, ‘The wise and erudite *Reasoner*, manufacturing pert doubts of the truth of religion, and repeating difficulties long ago killed and buried.’ An infidel workman from Glasgow is depicted as sitting in a Temperance Hotel (Mr. Spurr’s, I suppose), with the last number of the *Reasoner*, and the ‘respectable *Dispatch*’ by his side. The hero of the tale, who at first is deluded by the unbelieving Glaswegian and the *Reasoner*, is converted by some very wishy washy, twaddling sentiment, to which it is really hopeful to see the devout reduced. E. B.

J. Scott is informed, that the publication of the names of those who give publicity to and sell the *Reasoner*, has already commenced on the wrapper of the Monthly Parts. We shall be happy to add Mr. Scott’s name to the list, with his permission. Thanks for the other suggestion.

 Monthly Parts of the *Reasoner* are uniformly ready in a double Supplementary Wrapper every Magazine day. Volumes of the *Reasoner* are made up (and can be had bound) Half Yearly.

# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## RECENT LECTURES IN NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE & GALASHIELS.

MODERN preaching is the art, first of saying nothing, and then of meaning nothing: in other words, it is the art of saying only that which is prescribed in the doctrinal routine, and of not intending even that in any practical sense. Such is the character of the sectarian preaching of Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Rev. Mr. Pottinger has published another discourse on the 'Truth or Falsehood of Christianity,' repeating curious platitudes such as are confined to lower types of orthodox sects. The Rev. Mr. Binney, of London, has preached a 'Sermon to Young Men,' a remarkable contrast to the local effusions of the town in vigour, good sense, and fairness of statement. Mr. Binney is a native of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and deservedly a favourite with the inhabitants. On one night I examined his sermon, and hope to be able to print some notice of it here.

The *People* mentions that a letter has been sent by the Right Rev. Dr. Maltby, with a subscription in aid of the erection of a Presbyterian place of worship in Newcastle—the Rev. Doctor being 'painfully aware of the *spiritual destitution* of Newcastle, of its increasing population, and of the pains which have been taken to disseminate *Infidelity and Socialism.*' There are signs of practical organisation in self-defence against Superstition in Newcastle—such as will require another subscription from the good Bishop of Durham. The continued absence of the Rev. J. H. Rutherford from the discussion to which he so vauntingly challenged me, is producing its fruits of reaction against his cause. That one so enthusiastic and so well able to do battle for Zion should frequent all obscure places in preference to appearing in the arena he once so valorously selected for himself, is a matter of dangerous wonder to those who, not being able to appear in person in defence, expect their preachers to defend their opinions for them.

The Rev. Mr. Green is another instance, of which I reminded the Newcastle public. A gentleman on his behalf said that inability to endure the excitement of discussion was the cause. Of this he manifested no sign when he made the demonstration before me, which led to the appointment of the discussion. When the above reason for his declining the debate he had proposed was repeated, I said, then let him choose a Newspaper, a Magazine, or a Pamphlet, and answer me in his closet at his leisure. He continues to preach: he therefore is able to think and to talk, and might dictate if not write." The Young Men's Christian Society no longer wishes controversy. I reminded them that having met another person was not meeting me, as they proposed, and if one discussion had satisfied them, they could not, as we do, look to discussion as an ally—they must regard it as a foe, as something to be avoided. Mr. Stringer of that society appeared on two nights, if I remember rightly, and urged some objections with efficiency.

But our lectures, though they produced no defence on the part of Wesleyans, were not without effect. The Conference in that town furnished no champion to

do battle for Zion. Chivalry has surely departed from piety, since the sturdy sons of Wesley suffer their faith to be impugned, in the midst of their assembled representatives, without one word of reply. Methodism, it seemed, delegated its protection, at least tacitly, to a religious Jael, who appeared on the stage with the sure nail of the Lord, to be driven home, not by the master, but the mistress of assemblies. There liveth in Newcastle-on-Tyne one Mary Reed, and she chāmpionised Zion in a style that merits more space than I can find this week. We must vouchsafe Mrs. Mary a special appearance in our historical panorama of the saints of this century, weekly presented in the *Reasoner*.

One of the fruits of the lecture in Galashiels, of which a report appeared in the *Leader*,\* was a sermon by the Rev. James Smith, which he curiously entitled 'On Atheism, or the denial of the Father and the Son, was foretold in Scripture to be the Religion of the "last days."' The Ministers in this district would, I was told, have attended the lecture with the very proper view of disputing any erroneous position that might be advanced; but, consulting their Elders first, those prudent officers decided that it would be of no use their ministers attending, as there could be no discussing with one who rejects Theism. But, unless my eyes deceived me, some of those same Elders came themselves, tempted, it is to be feared, by the unsleeping enemy of Souls, who finds time to prowl up and down even Galashiels, seeking whom he may devour.

If, on this great question of Secular Instruction, I was there to advocate hurtful notions, the Clergy ought to have been present to have counteracted them, but if I, a visitor, was there to promote a good work, they ought, both in courtesy and duty, to have been there to help. It is an instance often occurring of Ministers being in advance of their flock, for in this case we should have the honour of their presence and the advantage of their aid, if their good Elders had been a little more thoughtful or a little more generous.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### FURTHER READINGS FROM MACKAY.†

'As a man may be intellectually a child long after he has ceased to be so physically, so nations comparatively enlightened contain many individuals who are but the spoiled children of civilisation, contributing nothing to its progress, and who more or less belong to that intellectual infancy of mankind which has been called the mythic age.'

We are dividing into two great parties—the one religious, the other irreligious; and people who think must make up their minds to belong to one or another. Religion has been encouraged by the state, religion has become the fashion in society, and the result is that men in whom we cannot refuse to acknowledge learning and talents have become bigoted and superstitious. In what other way can we account for the numbers who have increased the ranks of superstition, progressing in Puseyism, and perfecting in Popery. It is the fault of government, who have encouraged religious education in every sect, and discountenanced *secular*—who have assisted the erection of churches and chapels, and yielded to the fictitious famine cry of more bishops and parsons in a church and profession that hunger

\* This lecture occurred before the Newcastle ones, but the notice of it has been delayed unavoidably.

† 'Progress of the Intellect,' by R. W. Mackay.

after emoluments as well as the gratification of spiritual necessities. More, more is the cry, and the more they have the more they will want. The results of competition often are, in worldly things, that the public have to pay more; and the variety of churches and sects each require more funds to support their separate interests. The government not only gives to all classes of priesthood, but, instead of preventing by law, it proclaims that the wealth of the nation is to be the honoured prey of wolves in spiritual sheep's clothing. We equally blame those who profess spiritual and sentimental religion, whilst they ignore common creeds and cant about formalism. Awaken these nondescript emotions in the human mind, and it will attach itself to some reality in life. You may alter the superstructure, but all religion has the same foundation, and the idea will be built upon in every form. We seem to have arrived at the state described by our author, when the spoiled children of civilisation would bring us back to the mythic age. Succeeding passages of the author seem to refer to those whose belief cannot be explained by themselves, but who defend religion in general, as innate and natural to mankind, and transfer their spiritual and sentimental emotions within to whatever objects without they like—philosophers of this school and the most humble believer declaring alike that reason and common sense have nothing to do with faith and religion.

‘A man is never perfectly sane or perfectly matured. In every stage he shows more or less of that tendency to self-delusion most conspicuous in the earliest recollections of his race, and which was rendered inevitable by his undisciplined avidity for the marvellous, and his incapacity to distinguish sensations from external facts. Let the inward thoughts be assumed to be faithful copies or pictures of external objects, and all mythologies may instantly claim to rank as truths, inasmuch as they truly represent what once existed as mental conceptions; every gratuitous creation of fancy or unsupported generalisation of the intellect takes its place as a reality in time and place in history and science.’ ‘Again, the natural man is full of childish curiosity, but is easily repelled by the task of investigation, and satisfied with reasons insufficient or false. He finds it easy to wonder, but difficult to understand. He justifies his ignorance by insisting on the miraculous. The ready resource of a *first cause* at once silences doubt and supersedes inquiry.’

Though the author uses the word religion as vaguely as those whom he condemns, we have the religion of the heart characterised. ‘Religion often appears to be a mere sentiment, because the reason by which it should be disciplined requires long cultivation, and can only gradually assume its proper prominence and dignity. The faculties are seldom combined in its avowed service; and from its consequent misdirection has been inferred the impossibility of finding within the limits of the mind an effectual religious guide. It has even been said that religion has properly nothing to do with the head, but is exclusively an exercise of the heart and feelings; that all the teaching or education which can properly be called religious consists in the formation of the temper and behaviour, the infusing devotional feeling, and the implanting of Christian principles. In other words, the highest faculty of the mind is not required in the service of him who bestowed it. Through this narrow view the sentiments are overexcited, the judgment becomes proportionately languid and incapable, the connection between the theory and practice of duty is unobserved, and dogmas are blindly learned without regard to their origin or meaning. Superficial religion has everywhere the same results; it fluctuates between the extremes of insensibility and superstition, and exhibits in this respect

a curious parallel to the analogous catastrophe of notional philosophy. The uneducated feeling has only the alternative of unquestioning credulity, or of sacrificing and abrogating itself. This is the universal dilemma of artificial creeds—their votaries divide into formalists and sceptics, Pharisees and Sadducees. Calvinism, in our own days, has swung back to Rationalism, and the symbolical forms of ancient religion are pronounced by a competent observer (Plutarch) to have generally led to these contradictory extremes.’

‘The Jews, as a nation, were hopelessly illiterate; even the art of writing was a rare accomplishment among the lower classes in the age of the apostles.’ Matthew, Mark, and John probably did not know how to write. Jesus, also, was most likely equally ignorant. It is said of him that he wrote on the ground, as if to tell us that he knew more than the apostles did. But they do not tell us that he wrote manuscript, and therefore probably they could not read, otherwise they would have delivered to us the only composition of Jesus, which would have made him equal in that respect to his prototype Moses, who, we are told, did write. Dr. Giles has given proof that in the Old Testament they did not know addition, and Matthew showed himself innocent of arithmetic when he declared thirteen to make fourteen. That Matthew could not read is also probable, from the strange work he makes of quotations from the Old Testament.

Mackay observes—‘The Rabbis, whose learning consisted of a wilderness of formal observances and quibbling interpretations handed down by oral tradition, succeeded to the ancient authority of priests and prophets; and the Talmud is an exhibition of what had passed for wisdom among the most distinguished of the nation for many hundred years prior to its being committed to writing at Babylon or Jerusalem.’ If oral tradition was then committed to writing, it is probable that was the time the Old Testament was written, as Dr. Giles says.

Mackay tells us—‘As proof of the puerility of the Jews in their notions of the literary criticism, it is only necessary to recollect that the book of Enoch, an evident imitation of Daniel, written under Herod the Great, is seriously quoted by the apostle Jude as composed by the “seventh from Adam.”’ Estranged from foreign contact, and confined to the one only circle of mystic theology, Jewish literature was but another name for the Mosaic law; and its interpreters, the Rabbi and the Scribe, claimed an infallibility and authority over the laity superior even to that of the inspired writers on whom they commented, or of the law itself. In one instance, a Rabbi is appealed to as umpire, to settle a disputed point of the theology between God and the angels; and Rabbi Solomon Jarchi declares, that ‘if a Rabbi should teach that the left hand is the right, and the right the left, we are bound to believe him.’ The reader will not fail to perceive the resemblance between the Jewish and Roman Catholic churches. The latter sets itself above the Scriptures, and requires obedience to its authority, as Mackay relates in a note an anecdote of Lanfranc, who, corrected by his superior, changed his Latin pronunciation from a right to a wrong quantity, and of the University of Paris, who adopted an instance of bad grammar because a passage of the Bible had been so translated. Miserable indeed must be the man who gives up his conscience and independence to another. Yet these are the chains of slavery hugged by Puseyites and Romanists. What reliance can be placed upon the moral conduct of a man who may know what is truth and what is right, yet must yield his opinion and his practice to the dictates of his church or his priest?

W. J. B.



### Examination of the Press.

OLD CLO', OLD CLO'.—Did you never hear, with the mind's ear as well, that fateful Hebrew prophecy—I think the fatefullest of all—which sounds daily through the streets, 'Ou' clo', Ou' clo'?' A certain people once upon a time clamorously voted, by overwhelming majority, 'Not he; Barabbas, not he! Him, and what he is, and what he deserves, we know well enough: a reviler of the chief priests and sacred chancery wigs, a seditious heretic, physical force Chartist, and enemy of his country and mankind. To the gallows and the cross with him! Barabbas is our man; Barabbas, we are for Barabbas.' They got Barabbas. Have you well considered what a fund of purblind obduracy, of opaque flunkeyism grown truculent and transcendent—what an eye for the phylacteries, and want of eye for the eternal nobleness—sordid loyalty to the prosperous Semblances and high treason against the Supreme Fact—such a vote betokens in these natures? For it was the consummation of a long series of such; they and their fathers had long kept voting so. A singular people, who could both produce such divine men, and then could so stone and crucify them; a people terrible from the beginning. Well, they got Barabbas; and they got, of course, such guidance as Barabbas and the like of him could give them; and, of course, they stumbled ever downwards and devilwards, in their truculent, stiff-necked way; and—and, at this hour, after eighteen centuries of sad fortune, they prophetically sing 'Ou' clo'' in all the cities of the world. Might the world, at this late hour, but take note of them and understand their song a little!—*Carlyle: Latter-Day Pamphlets.*

ESSENTIALS OF A UNION FOR MECHANICS.—The Lyceums of Ancoats, Chorlton-on-Medlock, and Salford, have realised the three essentials of Mechanics' Institutions:—1. *Cheapness*, which both insures their advantages reaching those who chiefly need them, and, by enlarging their sphere of usefulness, increases their pecuniary resources. 2. *Self-Government*, which prevents their objects being perverted, as sometimes happens, from the real interests of the members to suit the personal or party ends of those who established them. 3. *Amusement and Instruction*. Such an admixture that, whilst the more aspiring seeker after knowledge is aided and advanced, is especially calculated to interest and benefit the humbler and more ignorant. *Female Instruction, Newspapers, &c.—Report of Mechanics' Institutions*, p. 44. Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. 1841.

POLITE LITERATURE.—A Tipperary priest, the Rev. John Ryan, writing to the editor of a local paper upon the question of fêting the two county members (Messrs. Scully and Maher), concludes his epistle with a flourish to the following effect:—'I am right glad that the "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill" has become the law of the land. This bill or law will work miracles in favour of the religion of St. Patrick and the Gospel of Christ, the Son of God. It will prove to be "the beginning of the end." Why do I say this? For this all-sufficient reason—It will make every rational man and woman in the kingdom who are outside the pale of the church of God—the Roman Catholic church—begin to think and reflect. Such thinking and rational persons will find on one side the English Government and the miserable, puny, politically-forsworn and apostate wretch, John Russell, and on the other God Almighty. This abandoned miscreant, John Russell, when he undeservedly obtained the premiership of these islands, forgot, and still seems to forget, that there is a God in Heaven to whom, before any and every other being, he is, and will be, accountable.'—*Times.*

A PRAYER FOR SLAVERY.—The New York *Anti-Slavery Standard* reports the following prayer to have been lately offered by the Rev. Dr. Bachman, a Lutheran clergyman. The occasion of its delivery is not stated:—‘We beseech thee, Almighty God, in *behalf* of that institution which recognises the rights and responsibilities of the master, and the obligations and duties of the servants. We thank thee that in thy divine and holy word thou hast laid down rules for the government of both, so that the former may not become an oppressor, or the latter be led on by wicked passions and evil advisers to rise up in rebellion against his lawful master, *protector*, and *friend*. We pray that we may be the humble instruments in thy hand of shedding the light of thy gospel over the minds of a benighted race. That the *folly* of those who would reduce them beyond the level of humanity, and incapable of understanding or receiving the truths of Christianity, may be made manifest by the orderly deportment, the affectionate obedience, and the devoted piety of its humble servant, who—whilst he is *identified* with a *race of higher intelligence*, who will be his protectors and guides—approaches also the altar of the same God, feels that he has an equal interest in the atoning blood of the same Saviour, and that, after having mutually performed their duties in their several stations in their families on earth, they may have an assured hope of being reunited in a land of light, of happiness, and immortality, in the regions of eternal glory.’

MR. RUSKIN'S WORKS.—Mr. Ruskin discovers that external objects are beautiful because they are types of divine attributes. In the first volume of the ‘Modern Painters’ we were startled by hearing of the divine mission of the artist, of the religious office of the painter, and how Mr. Turner was delivering God’s message to man. What seemed an oratorical climax, much too frequently repeated, proves to be a logical sequence of his theoretical principles. All true beauty is religious; therefore, all true art, which is the reproduction of the beautiful, must be religious also. Every picture gallery is a sort of temple, every great painter a sort of prophet. If Mr. Ruskin is conscious that he never admires anything beautiful in nature or art, without a reference to some attribute of God, or some sentiment of piety, he may be a very exalted person, but he is no type of humanity. If he asserts this, we must be sufficiently courteous to believe him—we must not suspect that he is hardly candid with us, or with himself; but we shall certainly not accept him as a representative of the *genus homo*. He finds ‘sermons in stones,’ and sermons always—‘books in the running brooks,’ and always books of divinity. Other men not deficient in reflection or piety do not find it thus.—*Blackwood’s Magazine*, Sept. 1851.

VIRTUE.—Did the whole of virtue lie in a conformity to the divine will, then nothing could be felt or apprehended as virtuous but in as far as the will of God appeared in it.....Now, with every allowance for the rapidity which is ascribed to the habitual processes of the mind, it does appear very obvious that justice directly and instantly announces its own moral rightness to the eye of an observer—that it is felt to be virtuous without any reference of the mind to God at all, and was so felt at the first, without any prior education in the jurisprudence of heaven, or any thought of a mandate from heaven’s sovereign. Though earth had, with all its present accommodations and with the actual constitution which man now has, been placed beyond the limits of his sovereignty, still he would have carried a sense of moral distinctions along with him, and met with objects of moral approbation—even with a mind desolated of all its conceptions of a God.—*Dr. Chalmers: Moral Philosophy*, p. 413.

### The Civil Rights of Jews.

THE constitution, it is said, is essentially Christian; and therefore to admit Jews to office is to destroy the constitution. Nor is the Jew injured by being excluded from political power. For no man has any right to power. A man has a right to his property; a man has a right to be protected from personal injury. These rights the law allows to the Jew; and with these rights it would be atrocious to interfere. But it is a mere matter of favour to admit any man to political power; and no man can justly complain that he is shut out from it.

We cannot but admire the ingenuity of this contrivance for shifting the burden of the proof from those to whom it properly belongs, and who would, we suspect, find it rather cumbersome. Surely no Christian can deny that every human being has a right to be allowed every gratification which produces no harm to others, and to be spared every mortification which produces no good to others. Is it not a source of mortification to a class of men that they are excluded from political power? If it be, they have, on Christian principles, a right to be freed from that mortification, unless it can be shown that their exclusion is necessary for the averting of some greater evil. The presumption is evidently in favour of toleration. It is for the persecutor to make out his case.

The strange argument which we are considering would prove too much even for those who advance it. If no man has a right to political power, then neither Jew nor Gentile has such a right. The whole foundation of government is taken away. But if government be taken away, the property and the persons of men are insecure; and it is acknowledged that men have a right to their property and to personal security. If it be right that the property of men should be protected, and if this can only be done by means of government, then it must be

right that government should exist. Now there cannot be government unless some person or persons possess political power. Therefore it is right that some person or persons should possess political power. That is to say, some person or persons must have a right to political power.

It is because men are not in the habit of considering what the end of government is, that Catholic disabilities and Jewish disabilities have been suffered to exist so long. We hear of essentially Protestant governments and essentially Christian governments, words which mean just as much as essentially Protestant cookery, or essentially Christian horsemanship. Government exists for the purpose of keeping the peace, for the purpose of compelling us to settle our disputes by arbitration instead of settling them by blows, for the purpose of compelling us to supply our wants by industry instead of supplying them by rapine. This is the only operation for which the machinery of government is peculiarly adapted, the only operation which wise governments ever propose to themselves as their chief object. If there is any class of people who are not interested, or who do not think themselves interested, in the security of property and the maintenance of order, that class ought to have no share of the powers which exist for the purpose of securing property and maintaining order. But why a man should be less fit to exercise those powers because he wears a beard, because he does not eat ham, because he goes to the synagogue on Saturdays instead of going to the church on Sundays, we cannot conceive.

The points of difference between Christianity and Judaism have very much to do with a man's fitness to be a bishop or a rabbi. But they have no more to do with his fitness to be a magistrate, a legislator, or a minister of

finance, than with his fitness to be a cobbler. Nobody has ever thought of compelling cobblers to make any declaration on the true faith of a Christian. Any man would rather have his shoes mended by a heretical cobbler than by a person who had subscribed all the thirty-nine articles, but had never handled an awl. Men act thus, not because they are indifferent to religion, but because they do not see what religion has to do with the mending of their shoes. Yet religion has as much to do with the mending of shoes as with the budget and the army estimates. We have surely had several signal proofs within the last twenty years that a very good Christian may be a very bad Chancellor of the Exchequer.

But it would be monstrous, say the persecutors, that Jews should legislate for a Christian community. This is a palpable misrepresentation. What is proposed is, not that the Jews should legislate for a Christian community, but that a legislature composed of Christians and Jews should legislate for a community composed of Christians and Jews. On nine hundred and ninety-nine questions out of a thousand, on all questions of police, of finance, of civil and criminal law, of foreign policy, the Jew, as a Jew, has no interest hostile to that of the Christian, or even to that of the Churchman. On questions relating to the ecclesiastical establishment, the Jew and the Churchman may differ. But they cannot differ more widely than the Catholic and the Churchman, or the Independent and the Churchman. The principle that Churchmen ought to monopolise the whole power of the state would at least have an intelligible meaning. The principle that Christians ought to monopolise it has no meaning at all. For no question connected with the ecclesiastical institutions of the country can possibly come before parliament, with respect to which there will not be as wide a difference between Christians as there can be between any Christian and any Jew.

In fact, the Jews are not now excluded from political power. They possess it; and as long as they are allowed to accumulate large fortunes, they must possess it. The distinction which is sometimes made between civil privileges and political power is a distinction without a difference. Privileges are power. Civil

and political are synonymous words, the one derived from the Latin, the other from the Greek. Nor is this mere verbal quibbling. If we look for a moment at the facts of the case, we shall see that the things are inseparable, or rather identical.

That a Jew should be a judge in a Christian country would be most shocking. But he may be a jurymen. He may try issues of fact; and no harm is done. But if he should be suffered to try issues of law, there is an end of the constitution. He may sit in a box plainly dressed, and return verdicts. But that he should sit on the bench in a black gown and white wig, and grant new trials, would be an abomination not to be thought of among baptised people. The distinction is certainly most philosophical.

What power in civilised society is so great as that of the creditor over the debtor? If we take this away from the Jew, we take away from him the security of his property. If we leave it to him, we leave to him a power more despotic by far than that of the king and all his cabinet.

It would be impious to let a Jew sit in parliament. But a Jew may make money; and money may make members of parliament. Gattan and Old Sarum may be the property of a Hebrew. An elector of Penryn would take ten pounds from Shylock rather than nine pounds nineteen shillings and elevenpence three farthings from Antonio. To this no objection is made. That a Jew should possess the substance of legislative power, that he should command eight votes on every division as if he were the great Duke of Newcastle himself, is exactly as it should be. But that he should pass the bar and sit down on those mysterious cushions of green leather, that he should cry 'hear' and 'order,' and talk about being on his legs, and being, for one, free to say this and to say that, would be a profanation sufficient to bring ruin on the country.

That a Jew should be privy-councillor to a Christian king would be an eternal disgrace to the nation. But the Jew may govern the money-market, and the money-market may govern the world. The minister may be in doubt as to his scheme of finance till he has been closeted with the Jew. A congress of

sovereigns may be forced to summon the Jew to their assistance. The scrawl of the Jew on the back of a piece of paper may be worth more than the royal word of three kings, or the national faith of three new American republics. But that he should put right honourable before his name would be the most frightful of national calamities.

It was in this way that some of our politicians reasoned about the Irish Catholics. The Catholics ought to have no political power. The sun of England is set for ever if the Catholics exercise political power. Give the Catholics everything else; but keep political power from them. These wise men did not see that, when everything else had been given, political power had been given. They continued to repeat their cuckoo song, when it was no longer a question whether Catholics should have political power or not, when a Catholic Association bearded the Parliament, when a Catholic agitator exercised infinitely more authority than the Lord Lieutenant.

If it is our duty as Christians to exclude the Jews from political power, it must be our duty to treat them as our ancestors treated them, to murder them, and banish them, and rob them. For in that way; and that way alone, can we really deprive them of political power. If we do not adopt this course, we may take away the shadow, but we must leave them the substance. We may do enough to pain and irritate them; but we shall not do enough to secure ourselves from danger, if danger really exists. Where wealth is, there power must inevitably be.

The English Jews, we are told, are not Englishmen. They are a separate people, living locally in this island, but living morally and politically in communion with their brethren who are scattered over all the world. An English Jew looks on a Dutch or Portuguese Jew as his countryman, and on an English Christian as a stranger. This want of patriotic feeling, it is said, renders a Jew unfit to exercise political functions.

The argument has in it something plausible; but a close examination shows it to be quite unsound. Even if the alleged facts are admitted, still the Jews are not the only people who have preferred their sect to their country. The

feeling of patriotism, when society is in a healthful state, springs up, by a natural and inevitable association, in the minds of citizens who know that they owe all their comforts and pleasures to the bond which unites them in one community. But, under a partial and oppressive government, these associations cannot acquire that strength which they have in a better state of things. Men are compelled to seek from their party that protection which they ought to receive from their country, and they, by a natural consequence, transfer to their party that affection which they would otherwise have felt for their country. The Huguenots of France called in the help of England against their Catholic kings. The Catholics of France called in the help of Spain against a Huguenot king. Would it be fair to infer, that at present the French Protestants would wish to see their religion made dominant by the help of a Prussian or English army? Surely not. And why is it that they are not willing, as they formerly were willing, to sacrifice the interests of their country to the interests of their religious persuasion? The reason is obvious: they were persecuted then, and are not persecuted now. The English Puritans, under Charles the First, prevailed on the Scotch to invade England. Do the Protestant Dissenters of our time wish to see the church put down by an invasion of foreign Calvinists? If not, to what cause are we to attribute the change? Surely to this, that the Protestant Dissenters are far better treated now than in the seventeenth century. Some of the most illustrious public men that England ever produced were inclined to take refuge from the tyranny of Laud in North America. Was this because Presbyterians and Independents are incapable of loving their country? But it is idle to multiply instances. Nothing is so offensive to a man who knows anything of history or of human nature as to hear those who exercise the powers of government accuse any sect of foreign attachments. If there be any proposition universally true in politics it is this, that foreign attachments are the fruit of domestic misrule. It has always been the trick of bigots to make their subjects miserable at home, and then to complain that they look for relief abroad; to divide

society, and to wonder that it is not united; to govern as if a section of the state were the whole, and to censure the other sections of the state for their want of patriotic spirit. If the Jews have not felt towards England like children, it is because she has treated them like a step-mother. There is no feeling which more certainly develops itself in the minds of men living under tolerably good government than the feeling of patriotism. Since the beginning of the world, there never was any nation, or any large portion of any nation, not cruelly oppressed, which was wholly destitute of that feeling. To make it therefore ground of accusation against a class of men, that they are not patriotic, is the most vulgar legerdemain of sophistry. It is the logic which the wolf employs against the lamb. It is to accuse the mouth of the stream of poisoning the source.

If the English Jews really felt a deadly hatred to England, if the weekly prayer of their synagogues were that all the curses denounced by Ezekiel on Tyre and Egypt might fall on London, if, in their solemn feasts, they called down blessings on those who should dash our children to pieces on the stones, still, we say, their hatred to their countrymen would not be more intense than that which sects of Christians have often borne to each other. But in fact the feeling of the Jews is not such. It is precisely what, in the situation in which they are placed, we should expect it to be. They are treated far better than the French Protestants were treated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or than our Puritans were treated in the time of Laud. They, therefore, have no rancour against the government or against their countrymen. It will not be denied that they are far better affected to the state than the followers of Coligni or Vane. But they are not so well treated as the dissenting sects of Christians are now treated in England; and on this account, and, we firmly believe, on this account alone, they have a more exclusive spirit. Till we have carried the experiment farther, we ought not to conclude that they cannot be made Englishmen altogether. The statesman who treats them as aliens, and then abuses them for not entertaining all the feelings of natives, is as unreasonable as

the tyrant who punished their fathers for not making bricks without straw.

Rulers must not be suffered thus to absolve themselves of their solemn responsibility. It does not lie in their mouths to say that a sect is not patriotic. It is their business to make it patriotic. History and reason clearly indicate the means. The English Jews are, as far as we can see, precisely what our government has made them. They are precisely what any sect, what any class of men, treated as they have been treated, would have been. If all the red-haired people in Europe had, during centuries, been outraged and oppressed, banished from this place, imprisoned in that, deprived of their money, deprived of their teeth, convicted of the most improbable crimes on the feeblest evidence, dragged at horses' tails, hanged, tortured, burned alive, if, when manners became milder, they had still been subject to debasing restrictions, and exposed to vulgar insults, locked up in particular streets in some countries, pelted and ducked by the rabble in others, excluded everywhere from magistracies and honours, what would be the patriotism of gentlemen with red hair? And if, under such circumstances, a proposition were made for admitting red-haired men to office, how striking a speech might an eloquent admirer of our old institutions deliver against so revolutionary a measure! 'These men,' he might say, 'scarcely consider themselves as Englishmen. They think a red-haired Frenchman, or a red-haired German, more closely connected with them than a man with brown hair born in their own parish. If a foreign sovereign patronises red hair, they love him better than their own native king. They are not Englishmen: they cannot be Englishmen: nature has forbidden it: experience proves it to be impossible. Right to political power they have none; for no man has a right to political power. Let them enjoy personal security; let their property be under the protection of the law. But if they ask for leave to exercise power over a community of which they are only half members, a community the constitution of which is essentially dark-haired, let us answer them in the words of our wise ancestors, *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.*'—*Macaulay's Critical and Historical Essays*, vol. 1, pp. 295-304.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## CAN SCEPTICS BE PHILANTHROPISTS?

SIR,—Miss Mary Carpenter, of Bristol, is a daughter of the late well known Dr. Lant Carpenter, Unitarian Minister of that city, and sister of the celebrated physiologist, Dr. William Carpenter. This lady has considerable scientific attainments, but is better known and valued here for her earnest and unremitting efforts for the education and enlightenment of the dregs—the very dregs—of our semi-civilised communities—the ‘perishing and dangerous classes,’ as she truly styles them. In aid of her exertions she has called in the assistance of the press to arouse attention to, and create a public opinion in favour of, the cause she has so much at heart, and has published a small work entitled ‘Reformatory Schools for the Children of the Perishing and Dangerous Classes and for Juvenile Offenders.’ It is not my intention to examine this work in your pages—what I have said above and the title of the book will sufficiently for my purpose show its object; but what I wish to do is to enter my protest, as one of a class, against the ‘first principles’ declared by Miss Carpenter to be essential in the reformation of the perishing and dangerous classes, as—good and gentle and earnest though the author be—doing me and others who think with me a great injustice.

Miss Carpenter says—‘First, *and above all*, there must be in the minds of those who carry out the work [the said reformation] a *strong faith in the immortality of the human soul, the universal and parental government of God, and the equal value in his sight of each one of these poor perishing young creatures with the more exalted of our race.*’ I object, in the first place, that a ‘strong faith in the immortality of the human soul’ is *not* ‘above all’ things necessary, nor is it at all necessary or wanting to qualify men for the task of reforming and teaching their unfortunate fellows. All that is necessary is active benevolence, and a firm conviction that all men, women, and children are equally alike entitled to enjoy the utmost happiness which their organisations will admit of; and this, not because they are immortals held for a while in mortal bonds, but simply and entirely because they are, here without their own consent, and have thus a natural and indestructible claim to be treated with justice and kindness by those who were here before them, and who possess the means and the opportunities for inculcating virtue, and stimulating to habits of industry and usefulness. I will mention but one illustrious example of the truth of my position and the falseness of Miss Carpenter’s. I will but mention the revered name of Robert Owen, the philanthropist, who has *done* more and striven more for the good of his kind generally, but of the down-trodden and slaving millions particularly, than any living man or woman; and who, whatever may be his opinions on the subject, has certainly never been influenced or incited to his generous course by a ‘strong faith in the immortality of the human soul,’ &c., but solely by an incessant and unquenchable desire to see all men comfortable, virtuous, and happy—in *this world*.

To the second member of the sentence—namely, faith in ‘the universal and parental government of God’—I object, that such belief, if logically acted out, would prevent any attempts being made to better the condition of unfortunate and erring mortals. For, inasmuch as human parents are assumed, as a general rule, to treat their children according to their deserts—chastening some and rewarding

others—so, by a parity of reasoning, if we take the position laid down by Miss Carpenter, that all mankind are under the parental government of God, when we see some men virtuous, prosperous, and happy, and others vicious, poor, and miserable, we should conclude that the former are what they are by God's special favour, and the latter are what they are by his special disfavour, and that to interfere in any way with such arrangement would be to defy the Deity, or at least to assume that we were wiser and better than he.

To the remaining member of the sentence—that 'each one of these poor *perishing* young creatures' is of '*equal value*' in the eyes of God 'with the most exalted of our race'—I object, that the very terms prove the fallacy it contains. If there are young creatures perishing in the midst of others who are safe and flourishing, all being equally under the eyes and superintendence of the Deity, it is proof, the strongest that could be furnished, proof demonstrative, that God does *not* care for or equally value the poor and vicious with the rich and virtuous, or he would instantly destroy the disparity between them—'ye shall know the tree by its fruits.'

With the sincerest respect for the amiable lady with whom I have felt myself compelled to differ, and with heartfelt wishes for her success,

Bristol, Sept 5, 1851.

W. C.

### SUPERHUMAN POWER.

SIR,—I trust you will allow me to square the number of my letters to you (*vide* Nos. 231, 238, 248). My last, February 26, you characterised as, 'disjointed.' But it was an avowed 'medley;' and I think there are worse styles than the desultory one, of which parts may be noticed by one, and others by another, of a different taste and habit of estimation.

I have now to submit to you a new point—of probability; for it is not capable of demonstration, in itself, either way—that '*The idea of a God could not have originated without sufficient cause.*' I expect to be met here with a belief in appearances of departed spirits; to which I answer, that, not crediting a tenth part of common 'ghost stories;' I have no doubt that some things claiming, or establishing, connection with what has existed as man on this earth, have hundreds of times appeared; and, if I have any personal reason, or by receipt of good evidence, for believing it, I can aver to you or your readers, if you will be so candid as to believe me, that it was perfectly unconnected with vulgar terror. Still, even this *might* be a corruption of the former belief: it may assist, it cannot oppose. And who could have obtained credence for the former without sufficient reason? Would even a grandson believe, without inquiry, that his grandfather had known something, and *such* a thing, which generations before him had never entertained the idea of? Here, sir, putting it in the light of probability only, I pause for a reply.

America was unknown, unless by superficial visits of the 'North-men' (Norwegians, Swedes, &c.), as they report, in the ninth and tenth centuries, for perhaps 3000 years. If the natives there had been found without any tradition or opinion of superhuman power, what a heavy argument would it not have been (in my view) for anti-theism. Then, let the opposite fact have its just weight.

Paley's simile of a 'watch' I humbly think sufficient for probability—such as is accepted in cases where opposition does not arise. To go further might be what Johnson terms 'milking the bull,' though I never admit mere sarcasm to be



argument. From a work of your own, sir, it appears that a Monsieur St. Hilaire affirms that 'the function of things is determined by their existence and arrangement.' I have no more objection to this than to the title of a French book which was, I believe, prosecuted in the last century—'Man a Machine.' The most accomplished machine I know; but I do *not* know that he was without a making power.

The function of a *Bridle* is determined by its existence and arrangement—of no specific use but to restrain the mouth of an animal. But what law determined its existence and arrangement? Not the sagacious coalescence of leather and steel, nor their knowledge of a horse's nature. Man was as a God there to all these; but man is very far from knowing or being fully able to accomplish everything, and analogy goes back to the impression of his forefathers.

Dr. Clarke's observation, that without theism 'Nothing must have determined the existence of all things,' is, I think, something more than a quibble; whilst I respectfully beg it to be observed, that I use the words 'superhuman power' in the largest sense, not attempting definition. I see by the same work that Aristotle said, 'if there was nothing but *matter*, there must have been an infinite succession of causes, which is absurd.'

Having alluded before to Cicero, and you having given some extracts from his writings since, allow me to conclude with a translation of the passage I meant, '*O præclarum diem,*' &c., at the end of his treatise on 'Old Age.'

'O! glorious day! when I shall depart to that divine congregation and assemblage of spirits, and quit this troublous and polluted scene. For I shall go not only to those great men of whom I have before spoken, but also to my own son Cato, than whom never was better man born nor more distinguished for filial piety; whose body was buried by me, whereas on the contrary it was fitting that mine should have been by him. But his soul not deserting me, but oft looking back, no doubt departed to those regions whither it saw that I myself was destined to come. Which, though a distress to me, I seemed patiently to endure, not that I bore it with indifference, but I comforted myself with the recollection that the separation and distance between us would not long continue. For these reasons old age is tolerable to me, and not only not irksome, but even joyous. But if I err in this, that I believe the souls of men to be immortal, I willingly err; nor do I wish that whilst I live this delightful error should be wrested from me.'

London, Sept. 12th, 1851.

J. D. PARRY, M.A., Camb.

### CATHOLICISM THE TYPE OF THE CHURCHES AROUND US.

THE following letter appeared in the *Northern Star* of August 30, in reference to Mr. Holyoake's lectures on Catholicism. 'Christopher's' reply appeared Sept. 6th.

MR. G. J. HOLYOAKE IN SCOTLAND.

SIR,—Mr. Holyoake has been delivering lectures here, in which he shows much folly, little logic, and no democratic wisdom. One of his lectures was headed 'Roman Catholicism—the type of all churches around us, all of which preserve its features, though they reject its name.' The battle-field of democracy is now the continent of Europe, where its sons and daughters languish by thousands in the loathsome dungeons, and none more so than those of the Papacy; and yet this man, pretending to be a democrat, comes forward as the apologist and clumsy white-washer of this Papal tyranny, by representing it as the only type of 'British churches,' or, as he says, 'of all the churches around us.' What church around

us has, as Gavazzi says, the bones of its impenitent broken by ropes and screws, the flesh torn by torture, or burnt with fire, the blood falling through the filter drop by drop! What church employs spies under the name of confessors, and makes children accuse their parents and parents bring their children to the scaffold? It is no church, but an impostor, and the vilest of despotism! And although its chief has but lately reascended his throne over the trunkless bodies of his subjects, giving their murderers his blessing—his worthless blessing. And although he and little Napoleon and all the despots of continental Europe are in league against the people of Europe, this pretender to democracy comes forward virtually as the apologist of Roman Catholicism. Democrat he cannot be—tool of Austria, of the Jesuits, or of Rome he cannot be—he is not worth their purchase. What he is I neither know nor care, but the apologist of the Papacy can be no democrat.

ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

MR. HOLYOAKE AND 'ONE OF THE PEOPLE.'

MR. EDITOR,—Allow me to state my opinion of G. J. Holyoake's lecture entitled 'Catholicism, the type of all the churches around us,' in answer to 'One of the People,' in the *Northern Star*, of the 30th ult. Having heard the lecture on three several occasions, and seen it in MS., I assert with confidence that it contained not one passage which could be tortured into a support of the reflections made by your correspondent. 'One of the People' attempts to impress the working classes with the notion that Mr. Holyoake goes about the country in his capacity of lecturer, as the 'apologist of Papal tyranny,' as the 'tool of Austria or the Jesuits,' only that 'he is not worth their purchase.' 'One of the People' cites the title of the lecture in question to sustain his attempt, leaving the lecture itself untouched. The lecture has been delivered to audiences in London, and several large towns and cities; discussed on platforms, reported and commented on by provincial newspapers, and it had been well if your correspondent's depreciating commentary had been accompanied with a few extracts. In the lecture referred to Mr. Holyoake described 'Catholicism as the unresting opponent of free thought and progress; and urged that as Catholicism is based on the authority of names in opposition to reason, it was quite impossible for progressionists to hold terms with it—they being diametrically opposed to its principles.

These are sentiments 'not worth the purchase of Austria,' certainly. The lecture described the professors of Catholicism as striving to maintain, at all hazards, infallible authority over affairs both temporal and spiritual, and as employing three agents to ensure their primary object—viz., Terror, Inquisition, and Persecution. An exposition of this kind is not likely to be paid for very liberally by the Jesuits, 'One of the People' may rest assured. Mr. Holyoake said he would exempt from all persecution those entertaining the doctrines of the Church of Rome, but recommended that every fair and argumentative means should be taken to counteract the tendency of those doctrines, which he said were 'pernicious and dangerous, and calculated to create distrust and alarm.' Can it be that 'One of the People' confined his attentions to the mere title of the lecture, as he terms these wise cautions to the friend of progress 'a clumsy apology for Papal tyranny?'

Some few months since Mr. Holyoake published his examination of Father Pinamonti's horrible work, entitled 'Hell open to Christians,' which had the effect of suppressing the publicity—if not the sale—of that work in London. Surely 'One of the People' must have led a life of solitude, or he might (and it is not expecting too much of one who advises the people), have learned something of Mr. Holyoake's views, before he entered on their total condemnation.

Mr. Holyoake invites discussion after each lecture he delivers. He has done so after delivering the lecture, 'Catholicism the Type of the Churches around us,' and has usually found his chief opponents in members of the Roman Catholic Church, who certainly did not mistake the lecturer for an ally, but as one opposed to them, and exerted themselves to destroy the influence he had created against their religion.

My conclusion, sir, is, that any claims Mr. Holyoake has to be considered a democrat are assuredly not invalidated by the lecture questioned by 'One of the People.'

CHRISTOPHER.

### Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 275, 627s. 6d.—James Meredith, Gwehelog, 1s.—Dr. Uttley, Burnley (annual), 10s.—J. W., 10s.—Mr. Gibb, Brighton, 1s.—Typo., Ulverston, 2s. 6d.—James Evans, Sheffield, 20s.—From Coventry, per Mr. Shuffbottom: E. Roe, 2s. 6d.; J. Lynes, 2s.; E. Turner, 1s.; H. Band, 1s.; W. May, 1s.; C. Shuffbottom, 1s. 6d.; C. Freeman, 1s.—Arnold Hamlet and Wilkinson Burslam were appointed to receive subscriptions in aid of the *Reasoner* Fund by the Council of the Manchester Social Society, and they forward 20s. from the following persons: Mr. Crabtree, 5s.; Luke Merry, 1s.; Abraham Ridge, 1s.; Francis Shanley, 1s.; Mr. Burton, 1s.; Mr. Thompson, 1s.; Arnold Hamlet, 1s.; Wilkinson Burslam, 1s.; Mr. Caldwell, 1s.; William Bullock, 1s.; William Melrose, 1s.; Charles Leese, Congleton, 1s.; Richard Keen, 1s.; Thomas Powell, 6d.; John Collett, 6d.; Mr. Pegg, 6d.; William Knight, 6d.; Mr. Shepherd, 4d.; Mr. Johnson, 3d.; Mr. Strahan, 2d.; A Friend, 1d.; A Friend, 2d.—James Gray, 1s.—Veritas, 6d.—Mr. Allison, 1s.—J. Foulds, Glasgow, 1s.—Total, 705s. 6d.

Mr. Holyoake, during the past fortnight, has lectured in Padiham, Colne, Burnley, Manchester, Todmorden, and Blackburn. To some of these places he has to return, and to fulfil engagements in Oldham, Stockport, and other places.

#### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Sept. 28th [7½]. Henry Knight, 'Religion: its Origin, Aim, and End.' Sept. 30th [8½]. Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Sept. 28th, [8], P. W. Ferfit, 'Mormonism.'

British Coffee Rooms, Edgeware Road.—Sept. 28th [7], Mr. S. Bowen, 'Religious Tract Literature.'

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [9], Discussion. Sunday evenings [7], a Lecture.

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

#### ADVERTISEMENT.

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### Our Open Page.

THE remarkable picture of St. John Preaching in the Wilderness, painted by Mr. Haberzettel, member of the Imperial Academies of St. Petersburg and Rome, of which we have spoken in some early numbers of the *Reasoner*, is about to be published. A Lithographic Print is being prepared from the original painting, which contains twenty-seven figures larger than life. The picture has received high commendations from accredited judges, both in London and at Rome, where it was painted, as also from the London and Italian Press. It is intended to publish the Print the same size as Raphael's Transfiguration, by Morghen, twenty inches by twenty-eight inches, and will be executed in the best style by the first artists. Subscribers' names received by Messrs. Paul and Dominic Colnaghi and Co., 13 and 14, Pall Mall East, publishers to her Majesty. The picture is to be seen in Litchfield House, No. 13, St. James's Square. The original drawing from which the prints are to be taken is to be seen in the Russian division of the Crystal Palace.

A society has been formed, called the Northampton Association of Secular Freethinkers, who wish to celebrate the formation of the association by having Mr. Holyoake to deliver one or two lectures, who will visit Northampton in October. Mr. Phillips has commenced a course of lectures in that town, upon Sceptics and Scepticism. His first was on 'Voltaire,' the second and third on 'Byron, the Peer, Poet, and Sceptic,' and the fourth on the 'Light of Nature' (open for discussion). That on 'Voltaire' was good, and characterised by a greater amount of liberality and impartiality than is usually displayed by persons holding opinions like Mr. Phillips's, and it gave general satisfaction. Those on 'Byron' were not so satisfactory. He adopted a new mode of criticism. He deduced the character of the man from his writings; and, as he picked out the worst he could find, of course he made him out bad enough.

Thomas Bickerton is informed that stamps are preferable to coin for transmitting subscriptions.

Three clergymen carried on a controversy in a theological journal as to the simplest and clearest mode of explaining the doctrine of the Trinity. The discussion appearing likely to become interminable, the editor at last declared it closed, and after paying some compliments to each of the disputants, but objecting to all their explanations as too obscure, appended an elucidation of his own, which was generally considered as having rendered the mystery still more mysterious, and, in fact, as more obscure than those to which he himself demurred. The Rev. C. Colton, author of *Lacon*, wrote the following *jeu d'esprit* on the occasion:—

'Cleve, Dennis, Carpenter agree,  
And fully prove a Trinity;  
For in their writings all may see,  
Not one incomprehensible, but three.  
But Flindell deemed the task undone,  
So finished what these scribes begun;  
And showed more clearly than the sun,  
Not three incomprehensible, but one.'

Dr. B—— one day told Horne Tooke that he had just witnessed an exemplification of the Trinity, for he had seen three men in a gig. 'Pooh, pooh,' said the etymologist, 'that is no exemplification at all; you ought to have seen one man in three gigs.'

# The Reasoner

AND  
THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## A WEEK IN EAST LANCASHIRE, PADIHAM, COLNE, AND BURNLEY.

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THE audience at Padiham was ample. Mr. Utley, surgeon, of Burnley, was called to the chair. The lecture was upon 'Organisation.' No debate followed.

At Colne, at Burnley, at Todmorden, at other places, small audiences were anticipated by some. For myself, I expected differently; and we had numerous assemblages everywhere. For the last year and half I have scarcely addressed a small audience till I no longer believe in them. In Colne, the numbers would have been no fewer, and of a more thoughtful quality, had the charge been greater. With respect to Burnley it has become a necessity to double the admissions, in order to reduce the numbers to the limits of order, hearing, and health.

In Colne we had questioning and discussion interminable every evening. On the Tuesday night, Mr. Hiram Utley, of Burnley, being present, he was called to the chair. On the third night, a working man (whose name I have lost), one of our Chartist friends, presided.

On the first two nights a tall, rude man—a species of Scotch Brindley—put questions, that species of questions which resembled those specified by Archbishop Whately, who, when he had 'to take into consideration a man's learning or ability, the question asked was as to the food necessary for his support; or his stature, if you were inquiring into his qualifications as a statesman; or the amount of his property, if you were inquiring into his state of health; or his muscular strength, if the question were as to his moral character.' When I had discoursed on the Church's defects, he demanded to know its *age*. The Christians present, though numerous, did not appear to see any irrelevance in this proceeding. As it ever is with the ignorant, who are ruder, more inconsiderate and exacting than the cultivated, our questioner would insist on my answering 'yes or no' to every question—even before I understood it. At length I put to him, in my turn, a question, viz., "Is the parallax of the moon a trapezium of a paralleloiped?" and I demanded 'yes or no.' After some evasion and stammering he answered 'yes or no,' meaning first it was, then it was not. It was a question certainly which few could answer readily, and it taught him that it was easier to be rude to another than to behave intelligently himself, and that no man could answer instantly to what he did not comprehend. On the third night he, as he had done before, so mis-stated my words and explanations, that I told him he was not entitled to any more notice from me. Nor did I answer him more. Encouraged by Christians present, especially by a Mr. Earnshaw, apparently a respectable Christian, he continued to speak in a gross and personal manner. I simply explained to the audience that incoherence or incontinence of speech, wherever manifested, showed a man to be irresponsible for his words, and to continue to recognise such opposition, would be to expose oneself to, and justify, the lowest order of opponency.

For more than half an hour the speaker indulged in every species of misrepresentation and every form of rudeness, sometimes calling me 'fool,' sometimes 'liar.' Many respectable Christians gave this display their applause and encouragement. They did not seem to believe the possibility of my listening to it all without interruption, and when he had done to offer no reply, but call upon the next speaker, which I did. The effect of it, in the end, they felt as a greater reproach to them than any reply I could have made.

We were favoured with a speech or two by Mr. Taylor, a Wesleyan local preacher—the same one who, on a former occasion, opposed Mrs. Martin, who, having made some objections to Christ encouraging his disciples on one occasion to buy a sword, Mr. Taylor objected, saying it was the sword of the spirit to which Christ referred, when Mrs. Martin begged to know whether that was the sword with which Peter cut the man's ear off. In my case, Mr. Taylor laboured to show that he entirely coincided with me; that he meant by God precisely what I meant by nature, and thought that I should not hesitate about a word, but use the term God. I suggested to him that he might set the example (since words seemed to him to be but terms of courtesy) and call himself an atheist. I expect to hear, when I next go to Colne, that Mr. Taylor, 'Wesleyan local preacher *and* *Atheist*,' is in the habit of discoursing to Christian congregations. He told me I should come to wish to die in peace. He (Mr. Taylor) had read in one of my works that Voltaire had expressed such a wish on his death bed. I answered that he had, but he expressed it to a priest whom he desired to leave him that he might die in peace. Peace not being possible while the priest was present, and so it proved with mankind. We had to remove that functionary in order to secure private or public peace.

Turning from religious argument, for handling which he will not have to account for many talents, he said it had been whispered, but he did not believe it; however I ought to know it, it was said in Colne that I was to have two pounds for each lecture. I corrected him, and told him it was two *guineas*, not two pounds. He seemed taken back with my explicitness, and the audience, who began to think his speech an impertinence, exclaimed against it. I, however, demanded that he should be heard out, for there was not anything that Mr. Taylor or any one else could say which I would not sit cheerfully to hear. When he had done, I explained that I asked for the remuneration I had named, which was no more than I could earn in other ways; and as the *Reasoner* commonly cost me 30s. or more per week, when the generous help of others had been counted, and would until it sold 6000, I had a right to payment for my labour; I probably did as much work for nothing as any local or ordained minister in the country. But I did not rest the matter there. My labour as to a lecture did not begin nor end in a lecture room, and I incurred risks other lecturers did not, and, besides, a lecture was a bargain with each hearer, and if he did not think that he had had value received for his admission money, let him not come again. It is due to the Christians to say that they one and all acquiesced in the justice of these remarks, and even Mr. Earnshaw distinctly joined.

The next appearance of our Scotch friend was at Burnley; the following account I copy, with slight emendations (in brackets), from the *Blackburn Standard*:—

'On the evening of Thursday last, Mr. Holyoake delivered a lecture in the Temperance Hall, Hammerton Street, Burnley, to a numerous audience. Mr. Hiram Utley, surgeon, occupied the chair, and Mr. George Edwards, bookseller, was on the platform on the occasion. The subject of the lecture was "Why do the clergy

avoid discussion, and why do their opponents seek it?" and had previously been announced by placard. Every clergyman and minister had also been furnished with a circular announcing the lecture and requesting their attendance, but we did not observe that any one had responded to the challenge. Mr. Holyoake arrived shortly before eight o'clock, and was immediately introduced to the meeting by the chairman. He commenced his discourse by briefly stating the subject announced, and endeavoured to maintain his positions by adducing personal experience and his own convictions in proof of the following propositions:—I. The clergy avoid discussion through fear of giving their opponents importance. II. They avoid it through fear of being outraged in it. III. They avoid it because they do not know how to control it. IV. They avoid it because they fear it. V. They avoid it because they do not understand it. Most of the remarks were of a very general character, and presented few points for discussion, except to the clergy themselves, none of whom were present. His own peculiar views of Christianity were almost wholly unnoticed, except in a short digression, in which he adverted to a "Law of the Human Mind," first stated by Helvetius, and since fully developed by Mr. Bailey, of Sheffield. At the close of the lecture Mr. Holyoake expressed his willingness to answer any inquiries which might be made respecting the subject of the evening's discourse, upon which a Mr. McGregor, a Scotchman, at present residing near Colne, got upon the platform and prepared to make some remarks on the subject. Mr. Holyoake then informed the audience that he had listened to the same gentleman's observations at Colne, a few nights ago, and did not consider him [for reasons he explained] entitled to a reply; and he would pursue the same course on the present occasion, whatever construction the meeting might put upon it. Some confusion here arose, but after a little delay Mr. McGregor commenced his observations, which occupied upwards of half an hour in their delivery, and seemed to have little coherence, and not to be very relevant to the purpose; besides his broad Scotch accent prevented him from being well understood. During his speech the meeting was in a state of indescribable uproar, some calling out for the speaker to be put down, and others equally vociferous for him to go on. A defect in his utterance also increased the confusion in the audience, whilst his manners on the platform were peculiarly offensive. He seemed to be suffering from catarrh, and his fingers almost incessantly did the office for his nasal organ which would have fallen to the ordinary lot of most persons' pocket handkerchiefs. Mr. McGregor, however, now and then made a shrewd hit, and was in consequence loudly cheered by his friends, whilst his opponents, on the other hand, exhausted all the sounds of which the human voice is capable. During his remarks he charged Mr. Holyoake with uttering a "wilful lie" respecting the cause of the death of his child during the time he was confined in prison; upon which the chairman offered a medical opinion, with which Mr. Charles Owen expressed himself wholly dissatisfied. Another scene of uproar then commenced, during which some one put out a portion of the lights, and a rush was made for the door. On its subsidence Mr. Owen made some further observations in opposition to Mr. Holyoake's statements, and objected to the term "brutal" which had been applied to his remarks. Mr. Holyoake then explained, and had no objection to retract the words [as Mr. Owen had disclaimed the feeling conveyed by his tone.] Mr. McGregor again attempted to address the meeting, but was unable to obtain a hearing. At this stage of the proceedings the chairman, being called to a midwifery case, vacated the chair, upon which several persons rushed upon the platform; and Mr. Rushworth, having to some extent restored order, informed Mr. Holyoake that he had been en-

deavouring to uproot Christianity, but had not produced a single article to substitute in its place: "he [Mr. Rushworth] had listened attentively, but he did not think he had got twopennyworth for his twopence;" and he considered Mr. Holyoake a "profound fool" for so treating his hearers. Mr. Holyoake made a short reply [simply explaining that all persons observant of what logically belonged, would consider him inconsequential if he took the course the speaker required], and was followed by Mr. John Place, the biologist, who was of opinion that the subject of the lecture had been entirely overlooked. Another scene of confusion here arose, during which Mr. Holyoake made his exit from the Hall by the back door, attended by Mr. Edwards, and was greeted by the audience with a loud cheer on his departure. Mr. McGregor then attempted to offer some further explanations, and amidst much confusion and uproar read a sentence or two from one of Mr. Holyoake's publications. By this time many of the audience had left the room, and several of those who remained commenced lighting their pipes and cigars. A cloud of smoke soon filled the Hall, and rendered it less agreeable to the senses than before; but Mr. McGregor seemed "nought abashed", by the fumes, and concluded his remarks by observing that "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." We understand Mr. Holyoake intends to give two more lectures in Burnley, and will confine himself entirely to an exposition of his views respecting Christianity, and what he thinks ought take the place of the present system of religion.'

This is the end of the *Blackburn Standard's* report. The *Manchester Examiner and Times* has also given a notice, recounting the points of the lecture. The proceedings in Blackburn subsequently rank with the events in Lancaster and Whitehaven, and will be detailed as soon as all the newspaper reports are to hand.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### EFFECT OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

'The secret strength of things that governs thought.'—SHELLEY.

(After the manner of Wordsworth.)

Ye sullen rocks and leaden-colour'd clouds,  
 Ye heavy-headed trees, that moveless stand  
 Around the stagnant pool with weeds o'ergrown;  
 What vital power breathes from your inner works,  
 That thus draws forth the threads of human thought,  
 And heaves the breast with sighs? We are not made  
 To stand apart from aught that's in the world:  
 For at some moment doth the infinite soul  
 Of life and substance claim attention fixed,  
 And, by recoil of feelings gushing home,  
 Wake the deep quire of memory and grief;  
 Or, by some hidden sympathy, attest  
 That man with nature's every stape is kin;  
 Stars, stones, dead trunks—some, flame bright flower—some, dust!

—*Monthly Repository*, p. 415. 1835.



## Examination of the Press.

DR. VAUGHAN'S SERMONS.—Considerable knowledge of human nature, and the earnestness which arises from a strong conviction, expressed in a close and powerful style, are the literary characteristics that separate this volume from the mass of sermons. A more remarkable distinction is in the subjects Dr. Vaughan handles. These frequently raise questions that are now dividing theologians, or treat of matters that are exciting the laity and disturbing the churches. Whether it arises from the advance made in physical science, which is apt to give a material tone to the mind, or from that activity of intellect but absence of faith which seems to distinguish society in its full maturity and decline, or from the logical and *trying* spirit of the age, there is no doubt but that many things once implicitly received by believers, or scornfully rejected by sceptics, are now considered in a philosophical and critical point of view, not to confute but to explain. And whatever may be alleged against the orthodoxy of those who do these things, many of the doers are more piously minded than those who assail them. The controversy which divided the faithful at Edinburgh when Mr. Humphrey Clinker first arrived there, is now going on in other places, though the dispute on the eternity of Hell punishments may be conducted in a different manner. The embodiment of moral evil in the form of a person or persons is another question that employs the minds of thinking men, whose inquiries pass beyond doctrines and sectarian dogmas to the fundamental principles of revelation. The nature of human nature—the consequences of the fall, and the mode in which it operates upon mankind generally—is another moot topic, but on which possibly attracts less consideration than future punishments or the ‘personality of the Tempter,’ as having a more limited bearing. The fall is, so to speak, a theological question; the others are not necessarily confined even to Christianity. A spirit of evil and a future state belongs to all religions. Besides these topics, Dr. Vaughan treats of some subjects that have either a practical interest—as education, or a bearing upon passing topics—as the character of the priest. Two or three sermons are upon less special subjects, but treated with a closeness and applicability which gives character and interest to what in its nature belongs to the commonplace sermon. The religious opinions of Dr. Vaughan are strictly Protestant according to the Church of England, with a leaning to the Evangelical party, but without that tendency towards cant which sometimes accompanies *low-church*. His views are orthodox, of the old school of orthodoxy, before philology, ethnography, and kindred studies, had, in the hands of the German critics, appeared to render some explanation of certain passages in Scripture necessary, and to raise doubts as to whether the whole was *verbatim et literatim* to be received as inspired. To both these opinions Dr. Vaughan is opposed. When the Scripture speaks of the Devil as a person, we must receive him as such—that is, such a person as satisfies theologians, for the definition of person might be hard to settle. The ‘possession’ is an actual possession. The herd of swine is to be implicitly received; and proves not only ‘the personality of the Tempter,’ but that there are ‘legions’ of devils. Any attempt to resolve eternity into a long duration or indefinite time is to be rejected: we must take the few references to a future state as they stand, and then we are shut out from all conclusions save one—the eternity of future punishment. In a logical sense, this, no doubt, is the most conclusive. When the whole text is received as inspired throughout, Scripture becomes an infallible guide. If any portion may be rejected as of human composition, human judgment must be called in to decide

upon what is and what is not inspired, the fallible deciding upon the infallible. This part of the subject is not so much raised as assumed by Dr. Vaughan: his arguments are chiefly directed to meet specious objections, especially that of reasoning from our condition to the condition of beings above us. So exceedingly difficult, however, is the whole theme, that Dr. Vaughan cannot avoid falling into that very line of argument which it is the direct purpose of his discourses to condemn. This is *his* explanation of the *nature* of future punishments:—The notion of the possibility of a future restoration of the wicked to the happiness of the just has been fostered, we cannot doubt, by an unworthy conception of the nature of their punishment. If that punishment consisted only or chiefly in the infliction of external suffering; if the awful images by which the Scriptures have sought to bring home to the human understanding the realities of that retribution—images of chains and stripes, of a delivery to the tormentors, of an undying worm and an unquenchable fire—were to be literally interpreted, and regarded as constituting the whole of that misery which they faintly typify; then, certainly, the sentence might vary in its duration with each individual case, and admit in every instance of an ultimate, however remote, termination. If the essence of the wrath to come were the infliction of a certain amount of retaliation, proportioned to the number or complexion of the sins in each case to be revenged, it might be limited in extent, as well as in severity, and its cessation might at once restore the sufferer to a repose which it alone had interrupted. But if the true account of its nature be widely different; if it be more correctly described as a reaping after sowing, a harvest gradually matured, a receiving back of things done in the body, an eating of the fruit of our own ways—and these are representations of it familiar to every reader of the Scriptures—if, in short, the tormentors then to be encountered are the *sins themselves*; the habits of mind formed in this life; the evil lustings which possessed us here, and to which all gratification will be there for ever denied; the reproaches of an evil conscience, which no hope of repentance or amendment can then allay or palliate; the remembrance of opportunities irrecoverably lost, of time and talents irremediably wasted, of grace fatally resisted, and now abhorred, as well as withdrawn; if *thought* be thus the chief minister of vengeance, the sinner his own tormentor, and the absence rather than the presence of God the main instrument of His wrath; what room is then left for a diminution or cessation of punishment? what agency can then be imagined capable of effecting a moral change which Christ and His Spirit long offered in vain? what gradual, what sudden softening of a hardened heart can then effect a result impossible but on the supposition of holiness—a holiness never of spontaneous growth, and in this case deliberately refused while conscience still retained its vitality? Without holiness no man can see the Lord; without holiness, happiness is a contradiction, an impossibility: misery is in the mind, not in the circumstances: misery can only be removed by the removal, alleviated by a diminution, of moral evil; and that removal, that diminution, can only be effected with the consent, with the will, of the moral being who is its subject. A compulsory, an imposed sanctification, is none: yet what machinery can be then in operation to effect any other? When these things are remembered, the supposition of a reversible doom, an exhaustible perdition, a changing eternity, will become as unreasonable as it is unscriptural. Nothing can be more philosophical than this; it is an application of the law of consequences upon the largest scale. Yet, surely, if we may quench the 'fire' altogether, and turn the 'worm' into an allegory, there seems no reason why the same method may not be applied to other expressions of a similar kind.—*Spectator*.

### Defence of the Civil Rights of Atheists.

[FROM the *New York Tribune* — the *Times* of America (so different in liberality to our own *Times*)—we take the following defence of the civil rights of those not able to believe in a Supreme Being. Our readers will desire to possess these articles in a more permanent form than the newspaper admits.]

A physician was arrested at Lowell a few days since, charged with a gross crime perpetrated upon a woman while in a state of mesmeric trance, or suspension of the will, which he had produced. He was brought before a magistrate, the woman and her husband being the witnesses against him. It appeared, however, that neither of the two believed in the being of a God, and accordingly the prisoner was discharged from the accusation and allowed to go unpunished. It was not proved in evidence, as we understand, that the witnesses were habitual liars, whose testimony could in no case be relied on: nothing was done to impeach their veracity, or cast doubt on the fact that such an outrage had been committed as they alleged. The sole ground for pronouncing them unworthy of credence, and for declaring the legal innocence of the miscreant, was that they did not believe in the existence of a Supreme Being.

We have in our time known many persons whose misfortune it was to have a similar want of conviction as to this universal article of faith, but we have never found them, as a class, less reliable, less honest, less true, than other respectable members of the community. A few have been bad, and many exceedingly disagreeable, but some of the most estimable persons we have ever met with, men of great kindness and courtesy, and of the highest sense of honour, have called themselves atheists. Un-

doubtedly they were sincere in so doing; and the fact, as far as they, and the consistency and vigour of their minds were concerned, was lamentable. But to say that they would lie or steal more readily than other men, that they were worse fathers, friends, citizens, would be a great mistake. Indeed, there have been such men whose word their neighbours would confide in with more readiness than in that of others who called themselves Christians.

Why, then, should such persons not be allowed to testify before the Courts? Why should justice be balked, because a good and an honest man, whom nobody would in private suspect of giving false witness, cannot profess to believe in a fundamental doctrine of religion?

The meaning of an oath, in which God is called to attest the truth of the witness's allegation, is this: If I swear falsely may God punish me by damnation. The Supreme Being is invoked to note the words of the witness and condemn him if they are not true. The penalty is punishment eternal. For, when the oath was first used such punishment was so common an article of faith as the belief in a Deity. And yet there are now many who do not hold it, not only professed Universalists, but of other religious denominations. But they are not excluded from the witness-box in consequence. Were the rule strictly applied, they must also be rejected, since the man who does not believe God will punish him for a lie, is just as likely to tell one as the man who does not believe there is a God at all. For neither has the fear of the divine wrath before his eyes.

It appears to us that the invocation of the Divine Being as a pledge of truth, might as wisely and safely be omitted

from the formalities of justice as from the ordinary intercourse of men. It is not necessary for the purposes of daily life and business, and why should it be where one stands up to testify in a matter concerning the honour or life of his fellow? Let all proper formalities be observed; guard such evidences with sufficient legal penalties for falsehood; receive all the testimony affecting the veracity of a witness; but do not let the law prescribe that a man who would be implicitly believed everywhere else, shall not even be heard in a Court because he differs from other men on a doctrine of theology, no matter how great the importance of that doctrine in the view of others. The truth is, that the practice of making religious belief a test of judicial credibility is a relic of those barbarous days when women were drowned to prove that they were not witches, or required to walk unscorched on burning coals to show that they had not violated a commandment. Then character in every respect was tested by orthodoxy, and he who dared affirm that he held not every point of the general belief, was regarded as worse than a heathen and a publican. But now it is universally admitted that a man is not necessarily bad even because he may happen to be an infidel, but that he may still be upright and estimable in every capacity. The truth is practically established that moral qualities are dependent rather on the general moral standard of the community, and that on the whole, men are not worse nor better than the neighbours they associate with, independent of the abstract opinions they may entertain.

Such being the case, it seems impossible that this principle should long remain in force in legal matters, abolished as it has been in other relations of men. And such an application of it as this at Lowell must go far towards its erasure from the statute book.

[The *Albany Register* commented upon this article in the following fashion:—

‘We alluded briefly yesterday to the ungodly teachings of the *New York Tribune*, as exemplified in its warm, hearty commendations of the many virtues possessed by its atheistic friends. It needed not such commendation to show the cha-

acter of much of the *Tribune's* most sedulously-inculcated doctrines. Under the guise of great philanthropy and sympathy with the unfortunate, the scope and aim of its teachings seem to be to impress its readers with the belief that Christianity is a failure, that however useful it might have been in former times it is not adapted to the wants of the present, which needs something better, something more in accordance with the spirit of modern progress. The *Tribune* now is but little more, so far as its ethics and schemes for the regeneration of mankind are concerned, than a re-hash of the *Paris Globe* and other organs of exploded St. Simonism eighteen or twenty years ago.]

In a following number (for July 30th) the *New York Tribune* makes this reply to the above paragraph:—

Such things as the above are full of encouragement for every labourer in the arduous but not ungrateful work of rooting out old absurdities and wrongs, and establishing common sense and justice in their stead. For when the advocates of the former have no better way of sustaining their cause than such exceeding meanness and falseness as the *Register* here manifests—when they shirk the questions proposed for discussion, and merely assail the character and aims of their opponents, it is a clear admission of their impotence in the sphere of reasoning, and shows that they have in fact given up the controversy.

Let us recall to our readers what it is that the *Register* oracularly sets down as practical atheism. A man had committed a gross outrage upon a woman under circumstances of remarkable atrocity. The woman and her husband brought a complaint against him, they being the only witnesses. On the examination it appeared that neither of them believed in the being of a God. Therefore the magistrate decided, according to the law, that their testimony was worthless, and released the miscreant. There was no doubt either in his mind or in those of the neighbours, that the crime had been committed, and yet the criminal was allowed to go as if his innocence were undisputed.

We contended that the law which forbade the evidence of this husband and wife to be entertained was an unwise

and an unjust one, and entered very briefly into the general argument against it. The *Register*, apparently unable to show the argument to be erroneous, or that our conclusions were not justified by the facts, embraces the opportunity repeatedly to accuse the *Tribune* of practical atheism in order to feed an amiable feeling of animosity which it entertains against innovating ideas in general, and this journal in particular. We make no complaint of this, for as we had no share in the contributions by which the *Register* was started, we have no right to advise as to its course. But we may be permitted to suggest to our cotemporary that if his reading of the *Tribune* and of modern doctrines had been as thorough and a little more correct than his studies in the *Parisian Globe* and *St. Simonism*, he would have known that this charge of constructive atheism and hostility to Christianity, which he launches against us, has ceased to have an effect with the public, and especially with the religious portion of it. Too many ideas on which time has since conferred its brightest approval have been branded as atheistic, too many measures of unmixed beneficence have been set down as infidel for the world to be again deceived by such epithets. Galileo, Columbus, Jenner, Harvey, were condemned as infidels by the leaders of conservative opinion in their day, not to mention the examples from the history of theology and philosophy—and the facts about them have been widely read and pondered. And now the yelping of puppies or the screeching of owls can frighten men about as easily as the shout of infidel and anti-Christian can alarm sensible persons whose habit is to investigate and think for themselves. That shout was long since raised against the *Tribune* in vain, and we presume that at this day the considerable and increased body of readers who believe with us that the essential principles of Christianity ought to be applied to the distribution of land (land monopoly being abolished), and the organisation of productive labour, of commerce, and of domestic industry and consumption, as well as that other large body of readers who take the *Tribune* that they may know what is going on in the world, will not now be seriously diminished.

Accordingly, if the *Register* has any-

thing to say to us, we invite it to the manly arena of discussion, which it will find much more useful and creditable than the flinging about of epithets and false accusations.

In order to show that we are not alone in our view of the question of admitting infidels to testify in courts of justice, we make the following extract from an article in the *Utica Observer* of Saturday:—

‘The *Register*, if it will brush up its memory, will find that in its unmanly and unworthy treatment of the *Tribune*’s article, it was libelling the character of its own Millard Fillmore. As early as 1832 the attention of Mr. Fillmore, then as now, a judicious, sound, and practical thinker, was called to the manifest injustice of the religious test, and a bill was introduced (by him, I believe) on the 1st of February, 1832, in the following words, “No person shall be deemed incompetent as a witness in any court matter or proceeding on account of his or her belief, or for the want of any religious belief; nor shall any witness be questioned as to his or her religious belief; nor shall any other testimony be received thereto, either before or after such witness may be sworn.”

‘The press of other important business which had a preference, prevented the wise and judicious provisions of that bill from becoming a law. But the subject was not dropped, and Mr. Fillmore, in a series of able papers, over the signature of “Juridicus,” published in the *Buffalo Patriot* in the winter of 1831, ably advocated and invoked public attention to the necessity of such a provision. The limits of this paper will not permit the making of copious extracts from the able pen of “Juridicus,” but I will endeavour to give an outline of his argument. After tracing the history of the religious test from the “dark ages when men were punished for opinion’s sake,” and when the rule of exclusion extended to all who were not under the “obligations of our religion,” down to the present time, he says, “it is not a little remarkable that every change has been in favour of admitting persons to testify who were before excluded. The narrow feelings of prejudice and bigotry have gradually given way to more enlightened and liberal views, and since the

doctrine has received the assent of all intelligent minds, that men do not deserve to be punished on account of the peculiarity of their religious faith, it is strange that they continue to deprive themselves of the benefit of their neighbour's testimony merely because his faith in certain unknown things is a little weaker or stronger than theirs. \* \*

“The fear of *future* punishments for false swearing has much less influence on the great majority of the people than may be at first imagined. No specific punishment for the breach of an official oath is prescribed by our law—sheriffs, judges, justices, constables, and other officers take an oath faithfully to discharge the duties of their respective offices—a violation of their oath is moral perjury. Yet in the great majority of cases it is no sooner taken than forgotten—it is scarcely thought of as an obligation—it is taken by the recipient as a mere ceremony to show that he intends to enter upon the duties of his office. Custom-house oaths and test oaths are still stronger instances of the almost perfect indifference with which false swearing is regarded, where there is no other penalty than the punishment to be inflicted by the Supreme Being for false swearing. It is clear that by the constitution, the most stubborn infidel is eligible to the highest office in the state. He may be elected governor, or appointed to the office of chancellor, or judge of the Supreme Court, and his infidelity is no disqualification whatsoever. And in times of war when not only the property of one man but the lives and property and happiness of a million and a half of souls may depend upon the integrity and patriotism of that man who has the direction and command of the public force. I say that that perilous crisis this same man who would not be permitted to testify in a justice's court, is, by the constitution, commander-in-chief of our arms and admiral of our

navies. But again, by the constitution of the state, your governor may be a professed atheist, whose oath by the laws of the state would not be received to convict a man of assault and battery or petit larceny, and yet by the same constitution, the same governor has the power of pardoning the criminal for the highest crimes after conviction.

“But how are you to know what a witness's religious opinions are? You must find it in the declarations of the witness. A is introduced as a witness—he stated, without being under oath, or feeling any apprehension of having inflicted upon him the pains and penalties of perjury, that he did not believe in a Supreme Being. The court concluded that he had spoken the truth, and that the fact was established that he did not believe, and he having spoken the truth in this instance with strong temptations to tell a falsehood and no restraints to prevent it, therefore they arrived at this natural and logical conclusion, that if he should be put under oath and be thereby subjected to the infamy and punishment inflicted for perjury, that he would most assuredly testify falsely, and therefore he should not be permitted to testify further. In brief, he has told the truth when not under oath, and this induces a *legal presumption* that he would commit perjury if put under oath, and therefore he should not be sworn at all. But look at this absurdity in another point of view: The honest, honourable, upright man, who would not tell an untruth to save his right arm, whether under oath or not, when questioned as to his belief, though it varies from the common standard, freely, candidly, and fearlessly confesses it and is rejected, while the dishonest, lying hypocrite, denies what his real sentiments are, tells a falsehood, and is admitted to testify.”

Perhaps the *Register* will now favour the public with an article, branding President Fillmore as a practical atheist.

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

### CHRISTIANITY VERSUS INFIDELITY.

SIR,—Some infidels with whom I have conversed assert that they are unable to believe the divine revelation, because its proofs are not certain like the proofs of physical science, which are absolutely and mathematically conclusive.

This argument will not, however, bear investigation. No philosopher would look for impossibilities; and we might as well expect water to burn, as look for an impossible kind of proof. Every philosopher will at once admit, that the nature of evidence must be adapted to the nature of its object, and that, if this adaptation is broken in upon, there will be no evidence at all; for evidence is no more interchangeable than objects. If mathematical evidence is demanded, the attention must be limited to mathematical disquisitions. The subject must be *quantity*. If it is desired to pursue a moral investigation, mathematics must be relinquished, and moral evidence alone be regarded. The subject must be *the relations which subsist between intelligent beings*. It would be quite as wise to apply a rule in ethics to the calculation of an eclipse as to call for Euclid when we want to know our duty, or to submit the question 'whether God has spoken' to the test of a problem in the conic sections. How could any prove mathematically that bread nourishes men, and that fever kills them? Yet we are as firmly convinced of the truth of these propositions as of any mathematical demonstration whatever; and should I call them in question, my neighbours would either pity me as an idiot or shut me up as a madman. It is, therefore, a great mistake to suppose that there is no satisfactory or certain evidence but what is reducible to mathematics.

Objections against a thing fairly proved are of no weight. *The proof rests upon our knowledge, but the objections rest upon our ignorance*. It is true that moral demonstrations and religious doctrines may be attacked in a very ingenious and plausible manner, because they involve questions on which our ignorance is greater than our knowledge. But still our knowledge is knowledge, or, in other words, our certainty is certainty. In mathematical reasoning our knowledge is greater than our ignorance—we argue from what we really know. When it is proved that the three angles of every triangle are equal to two right angles, there is an end of doubt, because there are no materials for ignorance to work up into phantoms; yet that knowledge is really no more certain than knowledge on any other subject. There is also deception in this matter. The defect complained of is supposed to exist in the *nature of the proof*, whereas it exists, for the most part, in the *mind of the inquirer*. It is impossible to tell how far the influence of human depravity obscures the light of human reason; but we know that the obscurity is great. For instance, can any one imagine that a man who has been long addicted to stealing feels the force of reasoning against theft as strongly as a man of true honesty? or that an habitual thief feels as much abhorrence of his own trade and character as a man who never committed an act of theft in his whole life? Can it be denied that the practice of any crime gradually weakens, and frequently destroys, the sense of its turpitude? This is a strong fact, that philosophy is bound to explain. To me it is clear as the day, that vice has debauched the intellect of such a man; for it is indisputable that the considerations which once filled him with honour produce now no more impression upon him than they would produce upon a horse.

Why? Has the vice changed? Have the considerations changed? No. The vice is as pernicious and the considerations are as strong as ever. But his power of perceiving truth is diminished by his vice; for had he not fallen into it, the considerations would have remained, and, should he be saved from it, they would resume their original force upon his mind. Reflect for one moment, how hard it is to persuade men of the virtues of others, against whom they are prejudiced! You shall bring no proof of the virtues which the prejudice shall not resist or evade; remove the prejudice, and the proof appears invincible. Why? Have the virtues changed? Has the proof been strengthened? No; but the power of perceiving truth is increased, or, which amounts to the same thing, the impediment to perceiving it is taken away. If, then, there are bad passions among men, and if the object of divine revelation is to control and rectify them, it follows that a man to whom the revelation is proposed will be blind to its evidence in exact proportion to the perverting influence of those passions. And were the human mind free from corruption, there is no reason whatever to think that a moral argument would not be as conclusive as a mathematical argument is now, and that the principles of moral and religious science would not command an assent as instantaneous and peremptory as that which is commanded by mathematical axioms.

The tables may be even turned upon the infidel, by showing that the evidence of physical science is not without its difficulties, and that objections can be urged against mathematical demonstration more puzzling and unanswerable than any objections against moral evidence.

To prove that physical science is not without its difficulties, let us take a common case. The Newtonian system of the world is so perfectly settled that no scholar presumes to question it. Go, then, to a peasant who never heard of Newton, or Copernicus, or the solar system, and tell him that the earth moves round its axis and round the sun. He will stare at you, to see whether you are not jeering him; and when he sees you are in earnest, he will laugh at you for a fool. Ply him now with mathematical and astronomical reasoning, he will answer you, that he believes his own eyesight more than your learning, and his eyesight tells him that the sun moves round the earth; and as for the earth's turning round upon his axis, he will say, that he has often hung a kettle over the kitchen fire at night, and when he came back in the morning it was hanging there still, but had the earth turned round the kettle would have been turned over, and the contents spilled over the floor. You are amused with the peasant's simplicity, but you cannot convince him. His objection is, in his own eyes, insurmountable; he will tell the affair to his neighbours as a good story, and they will all agree that he fairly and completely shut the philosopher's mouth. It may be replied that 'the peasant was introduced into the middle of a mature science, and that, not having learned its elements, he was unsupplied with the principles of correct judgment.' True; but *that very solution overthrows infidelity*. A freethinker, when he hears some great doctrine of Christianity, lets off a small objection, and runs away laughing at the folly, or railing at the imposture, of all who venture to defend a divine revelation. He gathers his brother unbelievers, and they unite with him wondering at the weakness or the impudence of Christians. He is in the very situation of the peasant; he bolts into the heart of a grand religious system—he has never adverted to its first principles; and then he complains that the evidence is bad. But the fault in neither case lies in the evidence; it lies in the ignorance or obstinacy of the objector. The peasant's ground is quite as firm as the infidel's. The proof of the Newtonian system is to the former as distant,



subtle, and cloudy as the proof of revelation can be to the latter; and the objection of the one is as good as the objection of the other. If the depravity of men had as much interest in persuading them that the earth is not globular and does not move round the sun as it has in persnading them that the Bible is not true, a mathematical demonstration would fail of converting them, although the demonstrator were an angel of God!

Let us next proceed to observe that there are objections to mathematical evidence more puzzling and unanswerable than can be alleged against moral reasoning. Now it is mathematically demonstrated that space is *infinitely divisible*, that is, *has an infinite number of parts*: a line, then, of half an inch long, has an infinite number of parts. Who does not see an absurdity in this? Try the difficulty another way. It requires *some* portion of time to pass any portion of space. Then as the half inch has an infinite number of parts, it requires an infinite number of portions of time for a moving point to pass by the infinite number of parts; consequently it requires an eternity, or something like it, to move half an inch!

The accuracy of the demonstration, that space is infinitely divisible, is not questioned; and yet the result deduced is infinitely absurd. Yet these difficulties do not make men sceptical as to philosophy; why then should men become sceptical as to religion on account of lesser difficulties? Surely it must be on account of the depravity of the human heart, as before stated; a depravity which shows the necessity of its being regenerated by the Holy Spirit, without which we are assured (by holy writ) none can understand the mysteries of redemption here, or attain to happiness in a future state.

A TRUE REASONER.

[We certainly are not among those who sin in demanding mathematical proof. We should be very content with much less. The letter of our correspondent has a certain ability, which entitles it to the attention of our readers, and at the same time a flippancy of assumption which must excite a smile. The writer has been very unhappy in the class of sceptics he has fallen in with—if he has fairly described them. We suspect, however, that our ‘True Reasoner’ is but a novice either in attack or defence, as he has neither mastered our case, nor comprehended that spirit of justness which is the best part of the pretensions of his own faith.—ED.]

### THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF MORALITY AND RELIGION.

SIR,—As you wish for papers on the independence of morality, I have taken my pen for the purpose of giving expression to a few thoughts upon the above subject.

The distinguishing features of morality are, first, that in the drawing up of rules for practical observance it takes into consideration the effects of human action; and, secondly, that in the correction of immoral practices, it always keeps in view the causes of such practices. It will thus be seen that, although it is utterly impossible to frame a perfect code of moral laws, we have something by which we can test our every action and our every word. It compels us to ascertain, as far as possible, the most minute effects of all we do and say, so that, for the future, we may avoid doing or saying anything that will prove injurious to ourselves or others. It also lays upon us the necessity of studying human nature and its relation to external objects for the purpose of becoming acquainted with

the springs of action, so that when we attempt to correct immoral practices, we may not plunge into the error of punishing an individual for that which was the necessary effect of certain causes, but at once proceed to modify those causes, or to effect their entire removal. Here, then, is work enough to keep in active and healthy exercise all our intellectual faculties and moral sentiments—exercise that will at once ennoble us as human beings, and produce a state of society where all is love and peace.

The main feature of religion, as it has been well described by Madame D'Arusmont, late Frances Wright, is that it demands 'a belief in, and homage rendered to, existences unseen and causes unknown.' It does not appeal to man's reason, but seeks to enslave him by working upon his fears and bribing him with, to all appearance, a mere phantom. Man's reasoning faculties can only be brought into healthy exercise by having something tangible to work upon, and they utterly fail in any attempt to grasp the unseeable and the unknowable. This one feature alone had so warped the universal judgment of mankind by diverting their attention from the true basis of moral action, that centuries upon centuries must elapse ere we shall be free from the miseries thus produced.

Rules for human conduct have been blended with almost every religions system; but those rules, instead of being framed upon the true basis of morality, have rested too much or entirely upon the mere will of the founders, and it not unfrequently happens that some of those laws and regulations have an immoral tendency—Christ's sermon on the mount, which contains practical rules of his life given by himself. In the fifth chapter of Matthew, and at the forty-second verse, he is represented as saying, 'Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.' But what would be the result of the carrying out of this law? There is not the slightest qualification, but it positively commands the giving to those that ask; and it would, therefore, constitute the greatest incentive to imposture and mendicacy. True morality, on the other hand, would institute an inquiry into the case and circumstances of the individual asking, in order that the giver and the public might be protected from deception: Christ's law, making no such provision, would encourage the vagrant and prove injurious to the best interests of the community. We thus see that religious laws for the regulation of our lives may have a moral or an immoral tendency according to the ignorance or the wisdom of the lawgiver; and it will be impossible for the devotees of any particular religions system to modify or obliterate any single law without, at the same time, repudiating the authority of its founder.

I might make further extracts from the doctrines of Christ, but, in this instance, one case is as good as a thousand. However, I have said enough to show that morality and religion are distinct in their natures, and that they rest upon foundations totally diverse; whilst it will also be seen that an individual may be a true Christian, and yet in one instance, at least, an immoral man.

Mile End.

SAMUEL POOLEY.

#### A 'CLERICAL SUBSCRIBER' AND THE 'CRITIC'

SIR,—Christians rarely comprehend their creed as a whole, and many express surprise when it is unfolded to them. The following, from the letter of a ' Clerical Subscriber' to the *Critic*, may convince sentimental Christians that Christianity has another element besides that of love. He is objecting to a recent review of a book entitled ' Life and Death,' whose object, he says, is to get rid ' of the uncon-

fortable doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked, by maintaining that of their utter annihilation.' 'Clerical Subscriber' has no desire that Christians should delude themselves. He quotes Bishop Pearson to settle the matter. The following is the paragraph entire:—

'Wherefore I conclude that the wicked shall rise to everlasting punishment, continuing both in soul and body under the wrath of God, and the torments proceeding from it, never to be quitted of them by annihilation, which is our first assertion against the covert doctrine of the Socinians.' Whether the bishop be right, let the words of Christ, quoted by him, help your critic to judge. 'Depart from, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;' and lest any one should imagine that the fire shall be eternal, but the torments not, it follows, 'and these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.'

CHARLES F. NICHOLLS.

### A THEISTICAL OPEN AIR PREACHING.

SIR,—The following appeared recently in the *Morning Chronicle*:—'Certain people have lately been making a loud outcry at Cardinal Wiseman's preaching in a *cul de sac* to its inhabitants, nearly all Irish Roman Catholics. May I venture to call to their attention, hoping they will show an equal vigilance, some open-air preaching of another description, going on elsewhere in London? Every Sunday evening there are persons lecturing at the Victoria-park (and I believe at other places in and near London) in defence of atheism. The person from whom this information is derived went the Sunday before last to hear them. He heard two men speak on the subject—the one a young man, evidently in a consumption, whom he describes as being very clever and fluent; the other a Jew, who ridiculed revelation altogether. He professed to have a great knowledge of the original language of the Bible, and said that our translation, in its prophetic passages, was not true to the Hebrew—not, he said, that that signified, as the Hebrew was a forgery.'

A.

#### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Oct. 5th [7], Ebenezer Syme, 'Is there a Life after Death?' Oct. 7th [8], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Oct. 5th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

British Coffee Rooms, Edgeware Road.—Oct. 5th [7], Henry T. Long, 'Philosophy and Religion of Shakspeare.'

Wardour St., Soho.—Oct. 2nd [8], J. J. Bezer, 'The Progress and Triumph of Democracy.'

Hall of Science, City Road.—Oct. 5th [7], a lecture, 'The World of the Future.'

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [8], Discussion. Sunday evenings [7], a Lecture.

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

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## Our Open Page.

DR. CAHILL, who has lately made himself so notorious by a speech in which he exulted over the supposed 'frantic desire' of the French to 'plunge their swords into the hearts of the English,' lately made use of the following exquisite pleasantry at a public meeting in Ireland, reported in the *Tablet*. He was speaking of the attempts made by Protestant clergymen in Connemara to convert the Catholic peasantry, and accused them of employing bribery in aid of their apostolic labours. 'The scale of prices,' says Dr. Cahill, 'in times of famine and fever are 3s. 6d. for a child above seven years of age, 5s. for a grown girl, and 7s. 6d. for a man able to read the Bible. They are also sometimes supplied with good food and clothing—some have been known to get as much as 7s. a week, with coals and candles; all this they have a good prospect of receiving during their natural lives in this world, and I may add that they will most certainly be supplied with coals for eternity in the world to come.'

Veritas, of Sunderland, writes:—'A few friends here are distributing *Reasoners* and copies of the "Logic of Death." We have had no lectures since you were here, with the exception of Mr. Gamsby's lecture in reply to Mr. Lamb. I have furnished several clergymen with copies of the *Reasoner*, and intend to go on with the clergy till I am certain every clergyman, of whatever persuasion, in this town knows that there is such a publication. I have already presented copies to the Revs. W. Woodcock, Wesleyan; A. A. Rees, founder of the Reesites; P. Kearney, Catholic; S. Turner, Calvinist; H. Peters, Rector of Sunderland; W. Kennicott, Monkwearmouth Church; W. H. Palmer, Incumbent of St. Andrew's; R. Skipsey, St. Thomas's Church; Dr. Patterson, Presbyterian. I also sent a copy to the Superior of the Convent of the "Sisters of Charity," likewise to Sister Marshall, of the same Convent. Now I think if a few more would work in this way, it might be productive of a great amount of good, ultimately enabling us to get properly organised, gaining for us the respect of our opponents, and probably, when having lectures, furnishing us with crowded audiences.'

In our 'Guide to the Lecture Room,' the lecture at John-street on Oct. 5th is by the Rev. Ebenezer Syme (recently Unitarian minister at Sunderland), who speaks in answer to the question, 'Is there a Life after Death?' his subject being 'Moral and Scientific Aspects of Immortality.'

'Let the furniture and domestic utensils of the rich and the poor,' says Mr. Wornum in his remarks upon the elevation of the taste of the people, 'differ only in material, not in qualities of taste; so that the cottage of the peasant may, notwithstanding its frugal simplicity, be as refined and as cheerful in its degree as the more gorgeous palace of the prince. The potter's clay is as capable of displaying the forms of beauty as was ever the marble of Paros, or the famed bronze of Corinth or Delos, or, as is now, the purest gold of Brazil. The Egyptian potter, more than 3000 years ago, produced with his simple earth forms as beautiful as all the wealth and art of Greece and Rome combined have ever produced since. And what is the fatality that hangs over us that our poor alone should be wholly debarred from the enjoyment of the beautiful?'

☞ Monthly Parts of the *Reasoner* are uniformly ready in a double Supplementary Wrapper every Magazine day. Volumes of the *Reasoner* are made up (and can be had bound) Half Yearly.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

MRS. MARY REED APPEARETH.

ONE of the opponents to which, tacitly at least, those chivalrous soldiers of Zion, the clergy and ministers of Newcastle-on-Tyne, abandon the defence of the Church, is Mrs. Mary Reed, a short, stout, matronly, motherly, loquacious woman, about fifty years of age. The old lady's opening speech was thus expressed:—

'Mr. Chairman,—I wish to make a few remarks. I desire to put a few serious questions to Mr. Holyoake. I demand—for the satisfaction of myself, for the satisfaction of this audience, and for the satisfaction of the whole world—what is the nature of Mr. Holyoake's individual essence? Whence came he? Whither is he going? Where did he get his powers? Has he got a heart? What is the nature of his brain? Who gave him reason? Who gave him intellect? Let him answer these important questions before he says there is no God. Before I sit down, I will put another question. Let me ask Mr. Holyoake, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whether he will confess that he is a great sinner. If he will, I will show him the plan of salvation—I will point him to the cross of him who taketh away the sins of the world. My friend, there is yet time to repent. Christ shed his precious blood for you, and he is ever ready and willing to forgive. The Lord have mercy on your soul.'

I replied that she had asked me more questions than I could well answer at once, I must therefore beg time to consider them, which pacified Zion's modern Joan of Arc for that night. But at the end of the next lecture the old lady appeared again, exclaiming, in vehement tones—

'I rise to press Mr. Holyoake for an answer to the questions I put to him on the last night he lectured. God has revealed to me that he has a precious soul to save, and I warn him to fly from the wrath to come. I call upon the Lord of Hosts to save this man (jumping on her seat, and turning round to her audience). I call upon every Christian in this place to join me in praying to the God of grace (in a state of great excitement). God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on Holyoake. God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, have mercy on Holyoake's soul.' Here a gentleman stepped forward, and kindly requested her to desist. After much persuasion, she consented. While she was delivering this prayer, the audience frequently ejaculated amen, some in earnest and some in irony.

The next morning, as I was standing in a bookseller's shop, Mrs. Reed presented herself there also, and producing a quantity of bank notes in what appeared to be a night-cap, she demanded to hire the hall to preach in, in reply to me. She required of me to meet her. I consented to hear what she had to say, provided she would put no more questions to me, nor expect me to reply—to do which appropriately I certainly felt myself inadequate. She consented, and what is more than

I expected, kept her word. The next day the Wesleyan Conference read upon the walls the following placard:—

‘Mary Reed, a chosen messenger of the Lord Jesus, will preach a Sermon (God willing), on Tuesday next, August 5th, 1851, at half-past 7 in the evening, in the Lecture Room, Nelson Street. A general invitation is given to all Christian ministers, and also to Mr. Holyoake. Ye ambassadors of the Lord Jesus, come forth “to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty,” lest ye should come under the sentence, Cursed are the inhabitants who came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Having received authority from the higher powers, should any one rudely attempt to stop my mouth, while delivering God’s message, they may be taken hold of by the police, and put out. To the pure all things are pure, but to the impure there is nothing pure.’ As Mr. Holyoake cannot answer my questions, he must allow that he has been defeated, as, according to his bill, he promised that he would answer any question proposed. May the Lord use the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and may the gospel of Christ be the power of God to the salvation of immortal souls. And, while I give free admission, I seek no higher honour than that which cometh from God. The love of Christ constraineth me to invite both Jews and Gentiles. I look at this subject in the light of eternity, and seek no other favour from man than to have a patient hearing—allowing any Christian minister, after my subject is over, to discuss with Mr. Holyoake. Remember the prayer of the Divine Redeemer—“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”’

I fulfilled my promise, and went to the lecture or sermon, which act ought to be credited by opponents to the account of my docility—for there is nothing in the way of weariness to be undergone after hearing Mary Reed. A gentleman in Newcastle has favoured me with the following memoir of this evangelical heroine:— ‘Mary Reed is married; she is now living with her second husband. As far as I can learn she makes a very good wife. She is very clean in her habits, and acts like other females in the common affairs of life. It is only under the influence of religion that she displays these flights of fanaticism. She believes she is inspired from above. She pretends to have special revelations from God. The commands of the Bible have a more personal allusion to her than to any other person. It was under one of these spiritual influences that my attention was directed to her. About two years ago I observed one of her placards on the walls of our town, wherein she informed the Jews that the Lord of Hosts had commanded her to go and preach in their synagogue. My curiosity became excited, and I resolved upon going to hear her. On my arrival at the appointed place, I found her taking up her position outside the temple, the Jews having prevented her occupying the interior. Around her was assembled a large concourse of people, composed chiefly of females, with a sprinkling of old men and young ones. By her side stood a young woman, the servant of Mary, holding a Bible as large as she could grasp and as much as she could carry. From this huge book—which was ponderous enough to contain all Mary’s revelation and the Apostle’s besides—did she preach for an hour and a half. I forget the exact words of the text, but they related to a command which she had received from the Lord to deliver his message to the Jews in Newcastle-on-Tyne. In her sermon she spoke to a great length on the crucifixion of Christ, and on the wickedness and cruelty of the Jews in putting the Lord and Saviour to death.’

On entering the Lecture Hall one night, after Mary’s sermon, some person

handed me the following note :—‘ Sir,—Mary Reed, of divine inspiration, has declared amongst her Christian friends that you, at her own house, declared that you doubted your system being true, and that you on your knees begged that she would pray to God to save you. Sir, I ask, in the first place, did you on your knees, in her house, beseech her to pray for you? Secondly, did you say that you are in error, and wished to be put right? for I think that discovering the error is half the cure.’ It was hardly necessary to say that this was all false. But it appeared subsequently that two persons had been and personated me, and wrongfully imposed on the old lady, who firmly believes that I really came to her, though I was in London at the time.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne is a questionable credit to religion, and Dr. Maltby ought to give his next subscriptions conditionally that some effort be made by the local shepherds to suppress such exhibitions as poor Mary Reed makes in the name of Christianity—an exhibition which, from her docility, they might easily suppress.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### W. J. FOX ON GODLESS EDUCATION.\*

‘ I do not intend this morning to go into the merits of the scheme for the new Irish colleges, but simply to examine into an objection raised against them, both by Protestants and Catholics, that the education proposed to be imparted there is a “godless education.”

‘ What sort of an objection is this? What is the godlessness? Both Inglis and O’Connell mean thereby *the absence of priests*. Unless there are priests in the colleges there is no God in the education. The *priest* is the representative of Deity. Does Deity require such representation? Deity represents itself, and is, in all that constitutes the substance of education. There is Deity *everywhere or nowhere*. In the stars of heaven, in the flowers of the field, in the depths of caverns, on the shores of the sea or the mountains of earth, in the interests of society and the records of history—in all these there is Deity, self-represented. If there be truth in the view that Divinity is everywhere, pervading all things, then the objection is to the whole subject-matter of education—therefore, to Deity himself; and the attempt of priests is *to prevent Deity from teaching infidelity by the works of his hands.*’

Mr. Fox then described the elevating and religious tendencies of science, adding—‘ Must not the truth thus everywhere apparent be much more powerful than the remarks of doubting opinion by which it may be accompanied? Can they destroy the tendency of the whole?’ He illustrated this by a translation of Newton’s *Principia* by some Italian Jesuits, who accompanied it with a preface, saying, that as Newton’s premises were opposed to scripture, of course his book was not correct. But who cared for the preface? ‘ So must it ever be. Science follows its own course, and takes a ground very high above the power of human nature to alter. Exclude all heretics from scientific teaching! Why, where would science have been if this course had been pursued in former times? What great men have been perfectly orthodox? The Galileos, the Newtons—where have they been but in the category of heresy? But, if heretical professors are not deemed fit to be entrusted with the work of education, why stop at colleges? There is much

\* Memoranda of a lecture (of applicability in 1851) delivered at South Place Chapel, June 29th, 1845.

education that has nothing to do with colleges. Exclude heretics from the legislature. Nay, why stop there? Establish a censorship of the press—let no book appear that is not orthodox. Why stop there? Go to the museums. The fossils tell strange tales of life that existed on this earth centuries before the days of Adam, and that was swept away long before the flood of Moses. Go to the British Museum, and expel thence the heretical fossil, the sceptical skeleton, and the infidel megatherium.'

'In these colleges it is proposed that there should be a Catholic priest to take care of the Catholic souls, a Presbyterian minister to take care of the Presbyterian souls, and a Church of England clergyman to take care of the Church of England souls. That is to say, there are to be three conflicting inquisitions instead of one inquisition. Under such threefold care the scriptures will probably be used much as they were by the poor negro, who, when asked by the missionary, "Sambo, do you make use of your Bible?" replied, "O yes, massa, I whet my razor on it every morning." So will they every morning whet their theological knives on it for sectarian controversy. Can such instructors know what instruction really is, or what religion really is? Religion must not be forced on humanity, or inoculated like a disease. To be real, it grows out of all life, all truth, all history—appeals to heaven and earth to tell the glory of God. If, in astronomy, the vastness of the universe, with its myriads of stars and worlds all revolving in their own orbits in harmony and beauty, impress on the mind the feeling of sublimity—why, that is religion. If, in geology, the contemplation of the work of ages in the gradual development of the earth, infuses solemnity into thought, or suggests the idea of unbounded existence—this is religion. If the beauty of earth acts on sense and soul, exciting both to life—why, that is religion. If, in the study of the tendencies of human nature, the great Past suggests the Future; or if a sense springs up of the Right and True, and their realisableness in human life—why, that is religion. *And the infidel teacher of science, in spite of his own theory, is a teacher of religion*, and cannot be made more so by the intervention of any priest or bishop whatsoever. All this outcry is for fear creeds should be injured. Nature—*there* is truth, and there should the mind seek it. Priests are most unfit to be trusted with the work of education.

'The true priests are not sectarian ones. Poets and philosophers—*they* are the best teachers; they are God and Nature's priests, enchaining the souls and hearts of their hearers with their lessons of faith and truth. Their persons may be in prison, and their reputation a prey to calumny; but they are the hope and promise of mankind, the heroes and redeemers whose mission it is to lead the world onward in its destined progression.'

S. D. C.

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#### A.D. 1852: A FORECAST.

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PRIESTISM, as our readers will readily believe, we hate intensely, especially where it is in unchecked ascendancy; but, with all our hatred of the thing, we look forward with dismay to that moment, now not far distant, when the manhood of nations shall at length have it in its gripe—prostrate, terrified, shrieking, and impotent. It has courted a violent fate, and, in all likelihood, will have it.—*Nonconformist*, September 10, 1851.



## Examination of the Press.

FATHER NEWMAN ON RELICS AND MIRACLES.—*Aris's Birmingham Gazette* gives a report of Dr. Newman's last lecture, in which the following passage appears:—'Certainly the Catholic Church, from east to west, from north to south, is, according to our conceptions, hung with miracles. The store of relics is inexhaustible; they are multiplied through all lands, and each particle of each has in it a dormant, perhaps an energetic, virtue of supernatural operation. At Rome there is the true cross, the crib of Bethlehem, and the chair of St. Peter. Portions of the crown of thorns are kept at Paris; the holy coat is shown at Treves; the winding-sheet at Turin; at Monza the iron crown is formed out of a nail of the cross; and another nail is claimed for the Duomo of Milan; and pieces of our lady's habit are to be seen in the Escurial. The Agnus Dei, blessed medals, the scapular, the cord of St. Francis, all are the medium of Divine manifestations and graces. Crucifixes have bowed the head to the suppliant, and Madonnas have bent their eyes upon assembled crowds. St. Januarius's blood liquefies periodically at Naples; and St. Winifred's well is the scene of wonders even in an unbelieving country. Women are marked with the sacred stigmata; blood has flowed on Fridays from their five wounds, and their heads are crowned with a circle of lacerations.....I will avow distinctly that putting out of the question the hypothesis of unknown laws of nature (which is an evasion from the force of any proof), I think it impossible to withstand the evidence which is brought for the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius at Naples, and for the motion of the eyes of the pictures of the Madonna in the Roman States. I see no reason to doubt the material of the Lombard crown at Monza; and I do not see why the holy coat at Treves may not have been what it professed to be—I firmly believe that portions of the true cross are at Rome and elsewhere, that the crib of Bethlehem is at Rome, and the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul also. I believe that at Rome too lies St. Stephen, that St. Matthew lies at Salerno, and St. Andrew at Amalfi. I firmly believe that the relics of the saints are doing innumerable miracles and graces daily, and that it needs only for a Catholic to show devotion to any saint in order to receive especial benefits from his intercession. I firmly believe that saints in their lifetime have before now raised the dead to life, crossed the sea without vessels, multiplied grain and bread, cured incurable diseases, and stopped the operation of the laws of the universe in a multitude of ways. [Freethinkers will be pleased with Father Newman for speaking so explicitly.]

THE HISTORY OF A VISIONARY.—'He spoke of his Doctrine to this man and that, but the most treated it with ridicule, with indifference: in three years, I think, he had gained but thirteen followers.....After some three years of small success, he invited forty of his chief kindred to an entertainment; and there stood up and told them what his pretension was: that he had this thing to promulgate abroad to all men, that it was the highest thing, the one thing: which of them would second him in that? Amid the doubt and silence of all, young Ali, as yet a lad of sixteen, impatient of the silence, started up and exclaimed in passionate, fierce language, That he would! The assembly, among whom was Abu Thaleb, Ali's father, could not be unfriendly to Mahomet; yet the sight there, of one unlettered elderly man, with a lad of sixteen, deciding on such an enterprise against all mankind, appeared ridiculous to them; the assembly broke up in laughter.....'Mahomet naturally

gave offence to the Koreish, Keepers of the Caabah, superintendents of the Idols" (by his crude and visionary notions, whose greenness was so *unpalatable* to the hoary superintendents). One or two men of influence had joined him: the thing spread slowly, but it was spreading.....He went on speaking to who would listen to him;.....gaining adherents in this place and that. Continual contradiction, hatred, open or secret danger, attended him.....By and bye all his adherents had to quit Mecca, and seek refuge in Abyssinia, over the sea. The Koreish grew ever angrier; laid plots, and swore oaths among them, to put Mahomet to death with their own hands.....But it was not to end so. In the thirteenth year of his mission, finding his enemies all banded against him, forty sworn men, one out of every tribe, waiting to take his life, and no continuance possible at Mecca for him any longer, Mahomet fled to the place then called Yathreb, where he had gained some adherents: the place they now call Medina, or "*Medinat al Nabi*, the City of the Prophet," from that circumstance. It lay some two hundred miles off, through rocks and deserts; not without great difficulty, in such mood as we may fancy, he escaped thither and found welcome. The whole East dates its era from this Flight, *Hegira*, as they name it: the year 1 of this *Hegira* is 622 of our era, the fifty-third of Mahomet's life. He was now becoming an old man; his friends sinking around him one by one; his path desolate, encompassed with danger: unless he could find hope in his own heart, the outward face of things was but hopeless for him. It is so with all men in the like case. Hitherto Mahomet had professed to publish his religion by the way of preaching and persuasion alone. But now, driven foully from his native country, since unjust men had not only given no ear to his earnest Heaven's message, the deep cry of his heart, but would not even let him live if he kept speaking it—the wild Son of the Desert resolved to defend himself like a man and Arab. If the Koreish will have it so, they shall have it. Tidings, felt to be of infinite moment to them and all men, they would not listen to these; would trample them down by sheer violence, steel, and murder: well, let steel try it then! Ten years more this Mahomet had; all of fighting, of breathless impetuous toil and struggle; with what result we know.....The word this man spoke has been the life-guidance now of one hundred and eighty millions of men these twelve hundred years.—*Carlyle's Lectures on Heroes.*

CHRISTIAN JEWS AND JEWISH CHRISTIANITY.—The religious world, as it is called, requires to be made a moral world. Let professors demonstrate their own Christianity before they talk of evangelising mankind. 'Do as ye would be done unto' is of the very soul and essence of Christianity. That is no Christian legislature which declares the elected Jew incapable of a seat on account of his religion. That is no Christian meeting which cares more for the profession of dogma than for sincerity, tolerance, and charity. There is a good deal yet to be done to make us a Christian nation. The Pope's hierarchy will not do it. Building new churches by hundreds will not do it. Partial and exclusion laws will not do it. Platform speeches and boastings will not do it; nor associations for converting the heathen. We must set about it in another way; must try the practical, instead of the dogmatical; emulate the virtues of other religionists instead of damning their souls, or refusing their civil rights; and substitute something of an honest love of truth for an insatiate rage to propagate our peculiar opinions.—*Publicola, in Weekly Dispatch, Sept. 7, 1851.*

The Bible test of Superstition applied to the Religion of this Country  
as—'by Law Established.'

BY F. D. BARTON.

SUPERSTITION is the belief in, and worship of, imaginary supernatural beings, which, having no real existence, are not able either to benefit or injure the worshippers. The non-existence of such imaginary objects of worship, is proved by their not giving any *indubitable* and *palpable* evidence of their existence and power. They do not give any 'outward and visible sign' that they hear supplication, answer prayer, or assist those that apply for their aid. The heathen nations, cotemporary with the ancient Jews, were reproached for their superstition by the Jewish prophets, because they worshipped and trusted in idols of wood and stone, which 'have eyes but saw not, mouths but spoke not, and ears but heard not'—which were altogether 'lying vanities,' totally unable to assist those who trusted in them. The same prophets pointed out the superiority of Jehovah, the object of the Jewish worship, over the idols of the heathen, from the circumstance of his being a 'living God,' who *proved* his existence and power by signs and wonders in favour of his chosen people—who heard and answered their prayers, and wrought deliverance for them in all their difficulties and distresses.

The God of the Jews was on very familiar terms with the principal personages amongst the Jewish nation. He talked with Adam and Eve. He dined with Abraham off veal, butter, and milk and cakes (Gen. 18). With Moses, we are told, he 'spake face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend.' As an especial favour, it is stated that he exhibited to Moses, with reverence be it spoken, his 'back parts' (Exod. 33). On one occasion, we are informed that Moses and

Aaron, and the seventy of the elders of Israel, 'saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone;' 'they saw God, and did eat and drink' (Exod. 24). To the Israelites, during their journeying from Egypt to Canaan, the presence of the Jehovah was made known by a cloudy pillar in the day time, and by a pillar of fire at night. When the Israelites offended Jehovah they were punished by plagues, fiery serpents, earthquakes, and defeat in battle. Thus the Israelites are represented to have had *good evidence* of the existence and power of the Deity they worshipped. All other nations but themselves are spoken of as *superstitious*, because the objects of their worship were not *realities*—were only *imaginary* beings, who did not *answer* the prayers of their worshippers, nor aid them when they sought their assistance and protection (See Isaiah 44, Psalm 115). Let the criterion furnished by the *Bible itself* be borne in mind when we wish to distinguish superstition from true religion, let this criterion be applied to the prevailing religion of this country in order to ascertain whether it is true religion or only superstition. Is there any superstition at the present day amongst those professing the religion of the Bible? 'Yes,' most educated and enlightened persons will reply, 'the Roman Catholics are superstitious, they worship images and departed saints who have no existence, or at least are not able to hear the prayers that are made to them, nor to help those who seek their assistance. The Methodists and Irvingites are superstitious, for they believe in visions and miracles; that Providence interferences in a miraculous manner in

behalf of particular individuals, and on the most trivial occasions, although they have no *evidence* of such supernatural interferences—none like that appealed to by Moses and Christ in vindication of the existence and power of the Deity whose worship and will they taught.' Roman Catholics, Methodists and Irvingites, are considered by the more enlightened and sensible as the victims of ignorance and of excited imagination and feeling, and as thus induced to receive as truth and reality that which is error and falsehood. Hence they believe in and worship the creations of their imagination instead of the realities of true religion. But let us inquire further. Are not those who consider themselves free from superstition, who account themselves the more enlightened and rational, also guilty of the very superstition which they condemn in others? Taking the criterion of the Bible for our guide, I say they are equally guilty of superstition. The more enlightened and rational amongst Christians are continually praying to a Being who does not give any *evidence* that he hears their prayers. They profess to rely on his providence and protection in all their difficulties and misfortunes, although he exhibits no proof that he can and will afford the interference and aid which they seek. Like the idols of the ancient heathen, the object of their worship does not *answer* when they cry unto him, nor vouchsafe deliverance when they invoke his protection. There is no voice, no answer, no appearance, no miracle, audible or visible manifestation of the divine presence and power, as was the case (according to the Bible) when the ancient Jews worshipped Jehovah under the direction of Moses. Church of England people assemble every Sunday in the church, and 'cry unto the Lord' most lustily, but he pays no attention to them. They vociferate Sunday after Sunday 'Lord have mercy upon us,' 'Christ have mercy upon us,' 'O Lord hear us,' 'We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord,' but the Lord gives no *evidence* that he hears them; he makes no reply; he exhibits no manifestation of his presence.

Church people, therefore, according to the *criterion* furnished by the Bible itself, are idolatrous and superstitious;

they worship not a reality, not 'the *living* God,' but a fiction of the imagination, a 'lying vanity,' which does not hear them, and therefore cannot answer; which has no power, and therefore cannot save; like the idols of old, which the Jewish prophets characterised as 'lying vanities,' because they answered not the prayers of their worshippers, nor saved them when they sought their protection, *i. e.*, they gave no *visible sign* of their existence and power. Nor does the object now worshipped by all Christians, and, therefore, they are all superstitious idolators.

Christians and infidels have often had discussions together on the truth and falsehood of religion, either through the press or by means of 'personal disputation': but to discuss the subject by words is waste of time—the truth or falsehood of religion is a matter to be decided, not by words, not by reasoning and arguments, but by facts. If the Deity whose cause is vindicated really exists, if he is a 'living God,' he will prove his existence and power by certain and infallible external signs, that shall set the matter at rest at once. This is the course which the God of the Bible is represented to have taken when his existence and power were doubted or disputed by the idolatrous heathen. A striking example of this is furnished by the prophet Elijah, when he vindicated the cause of Jehovah against the pretensions of the worshippers of Baal. He did not argue the matter, he did not bandy words with the priests of Baal; he took a far more sensible and satisfactory method to decide the question—he appealed to fact. 'How long,' said Elijah to the Israelite, 'halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.' He then proposed that each party should sacrifice to the object of their worship, and 'that God which answered by fire, let him be God.' 'And all the people answered and said it is well spoken.'

The priests of Baal first 'called on the name of Baal from morning even unto noon, saying, O Baal, hear us (as Christians now do, saying, 'O Christ hear us,' 'O Lord hear us'). But there was no voice nor any that answered,' whereupon Elijah began to mock them, saying, 'Cry aloud, for he is God; either

he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked.' Upon this the priests of Baal became frantic with anger and desperation, and cut themselves with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out upon them (supposing Baal was to be propitiated by bloodshedding, as the God of Christians is represented to be), and they cried aloud from noon till evening, still there 'was neither voice nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.' Elijah then sacrificed to Jehovah, and invoked his interference to vindicate his existence and power, saying, 'Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.' Immediately a visible proof was given that the prayer had been heard and accepted, for 'the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, the Lord he is the God, the Lord he is the God.'

Let the Christian priests of the present day submit the truth of their religion to the same test as that proposed by Elijah; let them call upon their God, in the face of those who doubt or disbelieve, to give some evident and indisputable signs of his existence and power. Why should not the same test be applied now to decide the question as was employed in the time of Elijah? What was evidence then would be evidence now. If the object of worship is still the same, if he is 'unchangeable' and 'without shadow of turning;' if his character and power are exactly the same as they were, the means he considered necessary in the time of the ancient Jews to vindicate his existence and supremacy, he will consider necessary to employ at the present time to convince those that doubt, and refute those that deny. Or if any other kind of evidence is necessary, he would not hesitate to employ it to set the matter at rest for ever.

Does any enlightened or sensible man believe that if the Christian priests of the present day were to resort to the test of Elijah, they would receive similar evidence of the existence and power of the God of the Bible whom Christians worship? Does any one believe that miraculous fire would come from heaven, or that an audible answer would be returned to the invocation of the Deity, requesting his interference to prove his existence and power? No man of common sense would expect any such miraculous evidence. The Christian priests might cry from morn till noon, and from noon till evening, as the priests of Baal did, but there would be no miraculous manifestation, no fire, 'no voice nor any other that answered,' no more than there is when the Deity is invoked so earnestly every Sunday in our churches and chapels. And would not this absence of all sign or answer on the part of the object thus invoked, prove that this object of worship had really no existence except in the imaginations of the worshippers, just as much as the absence of all sign or answer on the part of Baal to the invocation of his worshippers proved that the object thus invoked had no real existence? The inference cannot be fairly evaded. What was decisive evidence in the one case, must be equally so in the other. If we are required to have the same faith as those who lived in the time of miraculous interposition, surely we have a right to require the same evidence. We are told the age of miracles is past. We require no ghost to tell us that. This is admitted by believers themselves—it is an awkward admission; but they are forced to make it in the absence of all rational evidence to the contrary. Those who profess to believe most devoutly in the miracles of Moses and Christ, have no faith in any modern pretensions to miracles. They condemn them as evidence of imposture, or deride them as tokens of superstition and credulity. This is not consistent, for if miracles ever were wrought in behalf of the religion of the Bible, why should they ever have ceased? Surely they are as much required now as ever they were. Believers are ready enough to complain of the diffusion and increase of infidelity which is now assuming the darker hue

of atheism. Have miracles ceased because the Deity does not think fit to work them, or because the belief in them originates in ignorance and credulity, and the age is too enlightened to countenance them? Surely most persons of any enlightenment or common sense will adopt the latter conclusion—that miracles had no other origin than human ignorance and credulity, and, therefore, as knowledge and reason have increased and become more prevalent and powerful, belief in miracles has in the same proportion decreased and become weakened. Judging from the progress of unbelief, who can doubt that the time will come when unbelief in miracles will prevail entirely?

We find throughout the whole of the Bible, in the New Testament as well as the Old, that the Deity is represented as vindicating his existence and power by miraculous evidence. There is no intimation given in the Scriptures that this species of evidence would ever cease. But we know it has ceased; nothing of the kind occurs now that is worthy of the belief of any enlightened or rational person, and, therefore, we are justified in concluding that the miraculous evidence referred to did really never exist. The belief in it arose from superstitious credulity being imposed upon by those more enlightened, who employed deception and jugglery in order to obtain wealth and power at the expense of their ignorant and deluded votaries.

The religion of the Bible is thus proved to be a superstition. There is no evidence of the existence or power of the God of the Bible that is now worshipped by Christians. Like the idols of the ancient heathen, or the images of modern saints, when invoked or supplicated he gives no evidence of possessing any power to hear or to interfere. There

'is no voice nor any to answer.' If an Act of Parliament were passed to-morrow denying the existence and abolishing the worship of the God of the Bible, he would take it very quietly, and 'die without a sign.' If another God and worship were substituted, Jehovah would not be found to vindicate his supremacy and omnipotence, as he is represented to have done amongst the ancient Jews, by signs and wonders, by plagues and earthquakes and tempests and destroying angels. Who can doubt, if the belief in the Christian's God were abolished to-morrow, and Brahma or Siva or Mohammed were substituted in his place, and the articles of faith and mode of worship changed accordingly, that all things would proceed as before—that nature would pursue her wonted course—day and night, summer and winter, seed time and harvest, would take place as usual? The heavens would give their showers and sunshine, and the earth its increase; political reform would still advance, and the inhabitants of the three kingdoms become proportionably prosperous and happy. Such being the case, the established religion being proved to be superstition, producing no good whatever to its professors, but, on the contrary, a great deal of evil, causing mental degradation, slavish fears, contentions, divisions, uncharitableness, and, above all, entailing an enormous expense of many millions, extorted through superstition or through legal oppression, which expenditure might be so much more profitably employed in giving the people a sound, intellectual, and moral education, and in promoting their temporal welfare, so great and so many being the evils of the established religion, surely it is time it were abolished and destroyed for ever and for ever. Amen.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## CHRIST'S DEATH HUMANLY JUSTIFIABLE.

SIR,—The closely-reasoned article signed 'X,' in *Reasoner* No.14, Vol.XI., written in reply to Mr. Fleming, turns upon the point as to whether Christ's death was voluntary, free, and self-chosen, or designed, brought about, and compelled by God the Father. Mr. Fleming argues that it was voluntary, and therefore could not tell against the Divine character. Thus he admits that the Divine character would be involved if the death of the Son had taken place in consequence of, and in accordance with, Divine arrangements. 'X' attempts, and as I think succeeds, in proving that the doctrine of Mr. Fleming is unscriptural, and cites scripture to maintain that the death of Christ Jesus was not voluntary, that it was a sacrifice, previously foretold, made by the Father in heaven for man expressly, and fulfilled to the letter of prophecy.

'X' concludes his article by submitting that 'such reasoners as Mr. Fleming must ever fail to convince the atheist of the attributes of Deity from scripture, or of the falsehood of that moral philosophy which objects to the crucifixion of a child by his own parent.' 'X' is happy in his scripture readings with respect to the prophecy of the crucifixion and the fulfilment of it, even to certain particulars apparently unimportant: such as the soldiers dividing Christ's garments among them by casting lots, giving him vinegar to drink, and piercing his side with a spear. 'X' asks, could the soldiery do otherwise, seeing it had been pre-ordained they should do these things? Mr. Fleming thinks Christ's executioners culpable for what they did; the last remark of 'X' seems to exonerate them.

With respect to the morality of a parent being the author of his own child's crucifixion, that depends upon circumstances. In a human sense, at certain periods, it has been thought an indispensable, noble self-sacrifice on the part of a parent. Spartan mothers sacrificed their sons for honour and liberty—Pagan philosophers sacrificed themselves for their principles, and as an example to their disciples; and who, in these selfish times, shall charge those Spartan mothers and Pagan philosophers with immorality, seeing how ignorant we are of the estimation in which honour and liberty were held by those mothers, and truth by those philosophers; seeing how little we know of the cause and of the value of such sacrifices, and how little we are acquainted with that same feeling of disinterestedness which made them inevitable? In times when an enlightened people had to defend themselves on all sides from barbarous invaders, who came in overpowering numbers, self-sacrifice was a virtue; when forlorn hope was hourly the fate of the patriot, and a great people reposed on the devotedness of the few—then it was that the magnanimity of the few struck terror into the many. Had it not been for the sacrifice of Leonidas and his followers at Thermopylæ, the Greek people had never learned to despise the numbers of the Persians, had never known the majesty of self-reliance, had never felt that might by which they conquered. Who shall say that in those sacrifices wisdom and morality were not united with valour? 'Make a good meal, soldiers,' cried the hero of Thermopylæ on the morning of the fight, 'for,' he added, 'to-night we sup with Pluto!'—and they perished all, save one man. Again, when the aged father of the Horatii heard that one of his sons had fled, the others being slain, he was filled with indignation. The mes-

senger attempted to excuse the son, saying, 'What other resource had he than flight, overpowered as he was by three combatants?' 'A glorious death,' replied the old Horatius. Nor let it be thought that those heroes 'wantonly sacrificed life;' the better, not always the oldest, soldier prevailed in the council of the battle field, 'where good advice gave way to better.' Nor were the lives sacrificed worthless lives; the best and the manliest were placed in the hottest part of the fight. So with the philosophers, they did not perish for trifles but for truths which had cost them long years to develop, and which they felt assured would live after them. A great principle was to be introduced to serve the world, and a philosopher's death was the price of its acceptance: a great sin was to be judged and done away with, and the insolent and wicked crucified the moralist. All these sacrifices and martyrdoms served to give a tone to general morality, for such noble devotedness made even the selfish and cruel pause and set an example of good and just action to good men. It may be said that the various scientific inquiries into the nature of man so popular in these days, took their rise in the writings of those Pagan philosophers who sacrificed their lives to their convictions, and in their deaths gave emphasis to what they uttered, and at the same time attracted and fixed the attention and the consideration of a stolid world.

Thus we may safely arrive at the conclusion, that a parent sacrificing his child under certain circumstances may be justifiable, or at least reconcilable.

The death of Christ, if considered as a sacrifice for the doctrine which he advocated, is strictly reconcilable with examples which could be cited from the history of almost every nation. Nor is it difficult to understand why a son, and an only son, should be devoted to a cause believed to be sacred and paramount over all other considerations. Such a choice would be made to impress those for whose good the sacrifice was intended with a knowledge of the interest entertained for their welfare, and of the importance attached to the doctrine sought to be inculcated by those who made so great a sacrifice for its advancement.

CHRISTOPHER.

#### MR. GEORGE THOMPSON ON ATHEISM.

SIR,—You may know Mr. G. Thompson better than I do; may have heard or read more of his speeches, and may thereby be able to form a juster estimate of his worth than I can; but if a speech which he delivered at Bristol on the 4th inst., on the subject of American Slavery, may be taken as a fair sample of his speeches generally, then I must say that they are open to objection. He abused every one who did not agree with him: the chairman, a member of the Society of Friends, as worthy a man as ever breathed, he 'pitied' as 'infatuated;' our friend John Angell James he denounced as a time-server; Dr. Baird he designated a 'sacerdotal ruffian;' and every slaveholder, without distinction, he considered as worse than 'a thousand horse-stealers' rolled into one. What think you of the following from a man who inveighed against others for having 'blasphemed Christianity?' 'He would never countenance the lie that man could hold property in man [this the chairman did not do—he recommended "speaking the truth in love."'] *He (Mr. G. T.) would meet the chairman at the last dread day of judgment, and he would show him that as the slaveholder looked his last glimpse before going to his merited perdition it would be to thank the man who told him what he was and what he was doing, and who would have saved him, not by bedaubing him with untempered mortar, but by speaking the truth.'*



I should not have gone out of my way to notice Mr. Thompson's tirade against American slaveholders and their abettors, whose principles and conduct I hate most thoroughly, but that he began his remarks by belying atheism. 'He commenced by referring to his youthful advocacy of the cause of slave emancipation in the British colonies. He opposed slavery then as he did now, not because it existed under British rule, but because it was slavery; not because it was a deep and damning stain on the English government and people; but because it was a crime against humanity, an insult to God, *the highest practical form of unadulterated Atheism*, for one human being to claim property in another. Mr. Thompson boasted that he 'thundered out' his denunciations of American slavery 'in John Bull English,' and always liked to hear 'a spade called a spade.' Well, then, in the plain John Bull English, which Mr. Thompson so much admires, I tell him, that when he said that 'the highest practical form of unadulterated atheism' was 'for one human being to claim property in another,' he erred—that the 'highest practical form of unadulterated atheism,' is consistent only with the most perfect liberty of mind and body of every human being, compatible with the safety and interests of society; that atheists not only abhor and fight against body-enslavers, but mind-enslavers also; and that there is no such pernicious, freedom-crushing principles or precepts as the following to be found in the moral code of atheism: '*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of good. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the powers, do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*' Mr. Thompson claims freedom for the slave on the ground that slavery is opposed to the genius of Christianity. What can the most rabid and cruel slaveholder that ever lived want stronger than the above, and a dozen other similar passages which are to be found in the New Testament, in justification of his cruelty and injustice, and in condemnation of any resistance thereto? The most strongly marked, most frequently enforced precept of the New Testament is *abject servility to power and authority*; and that not always because forbearance and non-resistance are virtues, but because masters and magistrates are appointed of God, and that any resistance to their authority is a resistance of God's ordinances—thus justifying and making righteous the most abominable tyrannies and cruelties *when practised by masters and magistrates, and visiting with the pains of hell all resistance thereto.*

Bristol, Sept. 6, 1851.

W. CHILTON.

#### THE CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST.

SIR,—The department of the *Reasoner* headed 'Platform,' is really a very commendatory one, as ultras (of all shades) are considered as conceding freedom of thought in expounding their tenets; you will therefore, I beg, give insertion to a few observations I have to make on an article signed 'W. J. B.,' in your journal of the 23rd of July last, on the above topic. Your contributor attacks the character and the tendencies of Jesus Christ in measured terms, and denies him merit, even in a humanitarian point of view. I consider 'W. J. B.'s' arguments unfounded,

besides thinking that to act as he does is bad policy, even in a business-like manner of viewing the subject.

It is a haughty attempt, at any rate, to deny to the founder of the Christian religion even the common and general qualifications and attributes of human nature, and thus to stamp with utter imbecility or roguery those millions who sincerely have praised and revered him. To that extent, surely, men are never wrong. Amongst the first and principal attributes of Jesus Christ, I always considered his devotedness and sacrifice of every interest to his opinions and principles, because, 'W. J. B.' may know as well as any one, that the governor-general of Judea would have found some place or situation for a talented Jew, who might have embraced the interests of the mother country (!) It surely would not have been the taste of any common mind to choose poverty and privation to battling for the interests of an oppressed and enslaved people. Cromwell, Luther, Mahomet, had always their snug Sunday dinner, &c. Jesus Christ had not where to lay his head. And it is against such a character 'W. J. B.' directs his wit and sarcasm. It is easier to denounce than to imitate the vine of Nazareth. He wept over the miseries of his times; we make a laughing-stock of them.\*

Besides, as I said, I consider 'W. J. B.'s' *modus operandi* bad policy. Well, and if Jesus Christ was not even a good, a superior being, what then? Negations will never construct anything. We want some characters for our reverence, our adoration, if I may say so, which is one amongst the organs of man. Will 'W. J. B.' point out some other character, to whom mankind may look to a matter of solace, comfort, strength? Will he put up Plato or Socrates as such? But it will take him a long while to impress this on the peasants and the people of Europe. Still they have all some, albeit somewhat faulty, knowledge of Christ. If 'W. J. B.' will take this from man, he must be prepared to give something or somebody else instead. Robert Owen said well—'don't combat error, state truth.' Out of negations no position can ever arise, I repeat.

A FOREIGN REPUBLICAN AND SUBSCRIBER.

### THE INDEPENDENCE OF MORALITY.

SIR,—There is not such a thing as the independence of morality in the whole of God's universe; morality is in all cases subservient to Christianity, and dependent upon it. Where there is no Christianity, there cannot of necessity be strict morality. The Bible contains a code of morality of so strict a nature, as to stamp it with this impress, 'The most moral book extant'—there cannot be morality of a higher standard than is required by Christianity. The Christian is the only strictly moral man: there may be much in the man who is not a Christian, that may appear to the man of the world to be morality, but when compared with the requirements of Christianity are unquestionably the reverse, that is to say, only it is conventional morality. The Christian religion requires honesty, justice, sobriety, temperance, virtue, chastity, purity, brotherly love, meekness, humility, and the like; of all its professors, it prohibits licentiousness, adultery, covetousness, vanity, gluttony, selfishness, and immorality, in any shape or form whatever. I might refer to many passages in the sacred Scriptures for illustrations of my statements; but I will not intrude on your space, but would wish all persons to carefully peruse Nos. 9,

\* Our correspondent quite mistakes 'W. J. B.'s' argument.

10, 11, and 13 of the *Home*,\* where a fuller explanation of the subject, and many such references, will be found, by a person who signs himself 'Britannicus,' with whose sentiments I most cordially agree. My firm opinion is, that apart from Christianity there can be no strict morality.

H. G. WINTLE.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR MRS. LENNON.

Thomas Hull, Padiham, 1s.; Dr. Utley, Burnley, 5s.; W. E. B., London, 10s.; Veritas, Sunderland, 1s.; Walter Sanderson, Galashiels, 1s.; A few Friends at Heaton, per Mr. John White, Bradford, 10s.; Thomas Watts, Islington, 5s. Total, £1 13s.

[This subscription has not yet reached £5, which I trust it shortly will. The sums acknowledged from 'W. E. B.' and 'The Friends at Heaton,' were accompanied by cordial and generous expressions of interest towards the family of Mr. Lennon, with thanks even that the matter had been brought under their notice. These sentiments are no doubt shared by others who have not yet found an opportunity of remitting any expression of their opinion.—ED.]

### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Oct. 12th [7½], Henry Knight, 'Christ, his True Character.' Oct. 14th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Oct. 12th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

Wardour St., Soho.—Oct. 9th [8], H. T. Holyoake, 'General Progress.'

Hall of Science, City Road.—Oct. 12th [7], a lecture, Walter Cooper.

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [8], Discussion. Oct. 12th [7], Peter Jones, 'Phrenology.'

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday [8], a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

City Road Discussion Society, 22, City Road.—Discussion every Wednesday evening.

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\* A weekly periodical, conducted by R. Oastler.

## Our Open Page.

DR. HARRIS, President of Cheshunt College, says, in his sermon of the 'Christian Citizen,' that we are living in a moral necropolis, a city of the dead—that in London there are—

12,000 children always training in crime, graduating in vice, to reinforce and perpetuate the great system of iniquity.

3,000 persons are receivers of stolen property.

4,000 are annually committed for criminal offences.

10,000 are addicted to gambling.

20,000 to beggary.

30,000 are living by theft and fraud.

The statistics of evil are ever on the increase. Out of fourteen gin shops, it was ascertained that, in one week, there went into them—

142,453 men,

103,593 women,

18,391 children,

} or 19,245 into each of the 14 houses, during one week.

There are in London not less than—

80,000 females receiving the wages of prostitution.

400 panderers and procuresses, who live by inveighing girls, between the ages of 11 and 15 years, for the purposes of prostitution.

2,700 cases of disease, arising from prostitution, were admitted into three hospitals, in children between the ages of 11 and 15 years.

8,000 of these victims of pollution die annually!

Taken up for drunkenness—

In 1831 ... males, 19,748 ... females, 11,105 ... total, 31,353

In 1832 ... " 20,304 ... " 12,332 ... " 32,636

In 1833 ... " 18,268 ... " 11,612 ... " 29,880

Total in three years ... .. 93,869

Mr. Collet requests us to inform our readers, that the office of the Association for Promoting the Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge is removed to 20, Great Coram Street, Brunswick Square, where the Committee meet every Wednesday evening.

Mr. Forbes Kidd desires us to notice that the Smiths and Hammermen in London have resolved to form themselves into an Association for the purpose of conducting their respective trades by combining their capital, talent, and industry. Meetings are held at the Progression Coffee House, 17, Ryder's Court, Leicester Square, every Tuesday evening, for the purpose of forming the laws, and explaining the principles of association, and enrolling members.

Mr. Griffins informs us that the Primitive Methodists of Peterborough accepted a volume of the *Reasoner* from Mr. Scholey towards the erection of a new chapel. One of the preachers promised to give the value of it towards the collection, keeping the *Reasoner* for his own perusal.

☞ Monthly Parts of the *Reasoner* are uniformly ready in a double Supplementary Wrapper every Magazine day. Volumes of the *Reasoner* are made up (and can be had bound) Half Yearly.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

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They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

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## LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS

IN EDINBURGH, SOUTH SHIELDS, STOCKTON-ON-TEES, MILES PLATTING, MANCHESTER, TODMORDEN, AND BURNLEY.

THE lectures, three in number, in Edinburgh were delivered in the Calton Convening Room, a pleasant room to speak in. Each night the audiences increased, and included many different classes of society whom it was an honour to meet. Mr. Gillespie was one of the number one night, but he did not take any part in discussion. The disastrous proceedings conducted in the name of freethinking some years ago in that city have obscured any just, and prevented any patient, view of our principles; and I gladly embraced the opportunity of endeavouring to present them in a less personal, less antagonistic, and more dispassionate light. In the end, better feeling perhaps prevailed, but the commencement was sad enough. When the first lecture was over, nobody essayed to speak—the silence that ensued seemed impervious, and continued so a quarter of an hour. Innocent of the special temper of my dumb hearers, I entered into explanations of the points of my address open to assault from the Christian point of view, to make as easy as evident the mode of attack open to them. Little did I dream of the volcano of speech which slumbered around me. Shortly the vent was forced—the lava poured from all sides. Every second man proved a violent orator; they rose up like dram shops, which, in very religious districts in Scotland, appear almost as thick as alternate houses.

Some speeches were expressed with great bitterness. Beginning with expressions that in compassion might have become Jesus when he mourned over Jerusalem, they proceeded to an agony of ascerbity. A gentleman present afterwards described some of the speakers as manifesting 'a ghastly courtesy and a quivering respect,' so vindictive were they. But on the second and third nights they saw that the reproaches uttered did not apply to me, and they grew pacific and courteous. From the preceding description I have to except a reverend gentleman whose name I have lost, the Unitarian minister of Edinburgh, who stated his objections in that admirable spirit which the cultivated (they are not all equally agreeable) members of that persuasion usually display.

While in the Teignmouth district—where, as I can testify, the German Ocean makes a delicious bath in the month of August—I had an opportunity of lecturing in South Shields. There is an excellent Hall there, well ventilated and usefully contrived. I should have lectured there a second time, but the Hall could not be had on a Sunday. The good Christians of that town would consider it a desecration of the day. Yet they are not over fastidious in moral respects. South Shields abounds in detestable streets; yet the Christians there tolerate these. The Irish-looking and St. Giles's holes, in which hundreds of human beings live, where hu-

manity ought never to be found, are tolerated. Stench, fever, death assail you at every step, through a long line of execrable houses. The South Shields Christians tolerate them all, but they will not tolerate an educational, a political, or ethical lecture on the Sunday. When will Christianity grow moral?

Also, for the first time, I had the pleasure of lecturing in Stockton-on-Tees. There is room (I do not say there is need) for the expansion of ideas in that town, for the main street is wide enough for a public meeting to walk up it arm in arm, without interfering with the traffic. About a quarter past eight, on the night of the lecture, we had an accession to the audience of a boat load of friends from Middlesbro', who had hired a steamer and come up the Tees to the lecture. The discussion after was chiefly maintained by Catholics, who objected very emphatically, as they have done in nearly all places, to that lecture which the *Northern Star* describes as paid for by the Jesuits, or Austria, or Rome, or somebody, the correspondent of the *Star* does not exactly know whom.

Since this period a 'Mr. A. H. Lamb, from the Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities,' has published a sixpenny pamphlet 'On the Being of a God,' delivered in the Town Hall, Middlesbro', 'to which are added,' so says the title-page, 'Answers to Mr. Jacob Holyoake's objections to Dr. Paley's Natural Theology.' It seems something shocking to be attacked by a member of *two* universities, but it may prove a useful excitement now the cold weather is setting in. On the 20th, 21st, and 22nd, it has been arranged for me to lecture in reply, in the Town Hall of Middlesbro'.

Last week I reached London for four days, where I found such an accumulation of work wanting my attention, that I am anxious to close my journeyings for this year. About the 24th instant I shall reach town, and excepting an occasional lecture in Brighton, Northampton, Coventry, and Leicester, I shall dwell under the shadow of St. Paul's.

The first volume of the 'Cabinet of Reason' (some time ago alluded to) is in the press, and several sheets worked off and cast. Prospectuses and show cards ought to be out by this time. The essay on the work of Professor Newman on the 'Soul,' after which many persons have inquired, is nearly ready for delivery. Next week we hope to announce it. Other arrangements are maturing, which in due time will find publicity.

I attended the meeting of the Parliamentary Reform Association, at the opening of its Manchester campaign, to ascertain, by personal intercourse and observation, what of political hope was to be entertained in that quarter, and I think much may be entertained. They will do the right thing, if they receive general support from the working people. Sir Joshua Walmsley, who is the inspiration of the movement, may be trusted to mean what he says, and what he says is expansive.

While in the neighbourhood of Manchester, I lectured to the members of the Miles Platting Mechanics' Institution, on 'The Systems of Pestalozzi and Jacotot, in relation to Scholastic Discipline,' where many ladies were present.

At the Garratt Road Institution, Manchester, I lectured four times, and on the third Sunday read the Prefatory Pieces before the lectures of Mr. Thornton Hunt. The Manchester audiences were excellent. I never paid so pleasant a visit to Manchester before. It is disreputable that Manchester should not have a better institution than the Garratt one, and, if I can find the time, I will take some personal trouble that it shall have one, which is quite possible. However, much credit is due to the only men in Manchester who, notwithstanding limited

means, do work to the extent of their ability. For myself, I was never treated more kindly or paid more freely by any Executive than by that of this Social Institution. On the second Sunday night, an intelligent Catholic gentleman maintained a spirited discussion, the best we have had there for some time. Two little children, whose names were not written for me (or I should preserve them), were brought me to name after the second morning lecture. They were the daughters of two brothers.

The lecture at Todmorden was the first I had delivered in that agreeable valley. The place of speaking was in the Odd Fellows' Hall. The discussion after was decidedly the most pleasing of any I ever held in Lancashire. The opponent was Mr. Holding, a Wesleyan local preacher. His fine voice falling on the ear like a trumpet, and the justness of his remarks, made the evening both entertaining and profitable. The points raised were the relative claims of imagination and reason.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

[To be concluded.]

[Mr. Holyoake has been called to Birmingham by the dangerous illness of his father, but is to lecture in Preston on Sunday, the 12th, and in Accrington on the 13th and 14th. (This is written on the 10th.) We have the whole of the correspondence between Hiram Uttley, Esq., Surgeon, of Burnley, Mr. G. J. Holyoake, and the Rev. Dr. Bayley, of Accrington, which will appear early.]

#### MR. SOUTHWELL'S LECTURES IN GLASGOW.

WE have received a letter from 'Cleon,' of Glasgow, inquiring why we have not published a report sent us of Mr. Southwell's proceedings in that town. By the way, why does not 'Cleon' give us his name? We are always inattentive to anonymous correspondents, unless their communications have some mark of intrinsic excellence in them. We take this opportunity of saying that a former letter of 'Cleon's,' upon Responsibility, was received, and will be inserted. It seemed to require some notice, which there has been no time to bestow, and that has caused the delay. Besides 'Cleon,' a gentleman in Glasgow, a friend of ours, has written, describing the omission of notices of Mr. Southwell's lectures as 'amounting to a crime.' We have so much respect for the gentleman who says so, that an explanation is hereby given. If a crime, it is one for which we have no objection to answer. The omission originated in a simple circumstance. The only report of lectures which reached the *Reasoner* office was a rather lengthy one, signed 'George Millar,' and penned throughout in his hand-writing. But the examination of the first half dozen sentences satisfied me that it was not his composition. I saw Mr. Southwell's hand in every line. This would have been no reason for not printing it had the matter been good. Mr. Southwell has the power of writing reports which we should be pleased with the privilege of printing, for he neither wants vigour nor wit; but sometimes he puts his wit to a malicious use, and that was the case in this pseudo-Millar report. It abounded in personal reflections upon Mr. Lloyd Jones, Mr. Walter Cooper, and the Christian Socialists, in Mr. Southwell's favourite style of imputation. Now it would do nobody any good, and afford nobody any pleasure, to re-open a controversy on Mr. Lloyd Jones in the *Reasoner*. He asked to be left alone. The promise was given, and we have kept that word. We have since even omitted some honourable acknowledgments

which we wished to make, and which were due to him, for his exertions in way the of Social Reform, that our solicited neutrality might not be infringed. Criticism, which some think our pastime, is on the contrary only entered upon as a tribute, which we pay to a man's power or influence; but there is no reason to suppose that Mr. Walter Cooper would look upon it in that light, and therefore we declined to introduce him into the field of controversy. With respect to the Christian Socialists, our readers know how much they misconstrued our former notices of them. What arose in personal respect (which is still unchanged) seemed to them to arise in opposition. We therefore declined further controversy till some 'more convenient season.' To suffer Mr. Southwell to recommence it would be the same as doing it by proxy, and would look like an artifice to continue through others what we professed to avoid ourselves.

These were personal reasons for omitting the report in question. Besides these there was reason to believe that the 'Communists of Glasgow,' on whose behalf the report was signed, did not coincide with the sentiments it expressed; nor do I think that it would be passed as their report at any general meeting of them.

There was in the report some notice of Mr. Southwell's lectures which I intended to extract and insert; but the report arrived as I was leaving by railway, and I left it behind me in the haste of the hour, and when I procured it, it was too late for part of it to be useful, and I threw it aside, waiting for another more subsequent report, which has not since been sent.

'For two months past has Mr. Southwell been delivering three weekly lectures to full audiences in the Communist Hall, and each lecture has been succeeded by earnest and well-conducted controversy; besides, Mr. Southwell has had two public discussions (challenges) with very competent men, in the Lyceum Rooms of the city, on the Existence of Deity, and has again been challenged by a gentleman, stated to be one of the most acute linguist controversialists in Glasgow, to a controversy on the question of the materiality or immateriality of the soul. This challenge has been accepted by Mr. Southwell. Notwithstanding the public excitement which has followed these lectures and discussions, the press has remained silent. The discussions occupied four nights—the debate three hours each night. The Lyceum discussions have been most decorously heard by from five to six hundred persons, an indication that the working men of Glasgow are anxious to think for themselves, and ultimately to attain individualism of view—apart from state influences—in the matter of theology. Mr. Southwell has also been well received at Greenock, where he has been employed to give, and has given, two lectures on the Papacy—a subject rife at this moment.'

We extract the preceding facts from the letter of our friendly, we might say 'criminal,' correspondent, to whom, and to our Glasgow readers, we trust this explanation will be satisfactory.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

### THE DEATH OF MRS. EMMA MARTIN.

WE have the sad intelligence to communicate, of the death of Mrs. Martin, which took place on Wednesday afternoon at Finchley. The news reached me at Birmingham. My engagements for Preston and Accrington I at once suspended, and came to town on Saturday afternoon to fulfil those last requests which she did me honour to leave in my hands. All the respect in my power to pay is due to one who fought so well on our side as Mrs. Martin has done. I can say no more now. On Saturday some particulars may appear in the *Leader*, and next week the *Reasoner* will contain what cannot now be written.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.



### Examination of the Press.

ANECDOTE OF THE REV. HORACE HOLLEY.—This gentleman, says the *Boston Investigator*, who was a Unitarian preacher in this city many years ago, was probably the most eloquent minister that Boston ever had. He always preached extemporaneously, and, being a finished elocutionist and a man of great talent, was very popular and drew large audiences. As a pulpit orator, the Unitarians never had a minister that would begin to compare with Horace Holley—the next best was John Pierpont, his successor. Mr. Holley was a liberal man for his day, as will be seen by the following anecdote of him which we find in the *Trumpet*:—A Society in Braintree invited Mr. Holley to preach a dedicatory sermon, while several clergymen, whose opinions were in sympathy with those of the pastor elect, were engaged to take part in the ordination services. These gentlemen, alarmed at the celebrity of Mr. Holley, and dreading the counter-influence which his preaching would exert against their own, called on him in a body, a very short time previous to the day appointed, and requested him to decline performing the service for which he was engaged. Mr. Holley expressed great surprise at their request, and begged to know on what ground it was made. They replied, the ground was distinctly this: that he was not a believer in the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that therefore they could not conscientiously unite in a joint service with him on that occasion. After some remarks on the difficulty, if not impossibility, of ever procuring perfect uniformity of opinion among those who engaged in the services on such occasions, Mr. Holley said, ‘Pray, gentlemen, let me inquire if your own belief on this subject is so mutually correspondent as you imagine, and as would fairly justify you in making of me this unusual request. Does each of you firmly and unequivocally believe, that the being called Jesus Christ, who lived, and walked about, and ate, and drank, and died, on this earth, was verily the eternal God, the great First Cause of all things?’ On their at first hesitating to reply, he addressed himself separately to each of them, and received answers from them all. One of them professed not to be exactly prepared to answer the question; another said he did not entirely believe in the divinity of Christ according to the terms stated by Mr. Holley; another declared, that he believed it in a certain sense; while the fourth unhesitatingly said, ‘Yes, I believe that he was very God of very God.’ ‘Very well, gentlemen,’ replied Mr. Holley; ‘you see that your own minds are as yet far from agreeing on this subject, and if you will take your time to discuss it, and let me know when you all perfectly coincide, I will then be ready to make my answer to your proposal.’ They retired in silence, but they never called upon him for a similar purpose.

EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION.—Schools can scarcely be said to *educate*: they can instruct, they can instruct in religion as in arithmetic or geography; they can furnish therefore materials for education to work upon; and they can do something within very narrow limits, but on some essential points, towards the formation of moral principles, and the regulation of language and conduct. But when they profess to educate—I am speaking now of day-schools for the poor—when they profess to educate, in other words, to supersede almost or altogether the office and the responsibility of the parent, then they transgress their proper province, and must no longer complain if they are tried by a standard which, however unjust, they have themselves challenged. Those who have long used an exaggerated language as to

the miracles to be wrought by an extension of education—in other words, by the multiplication of schools—have no right to remonstrate against that interpretation of their words which would make it an act of infidelity or of profaneness to omit from their system the direct inculcation of religious truth. If all schools professed to educate, then from none could religious instruction be excluded, in none could it be optional or even subordinate. A school based on any other than a definite system of religious teaching would then be an affront to the understanding as well as the conscience of the place or the country in which it was set up. But is there not, in fact, room for a distinction which would justify the claim of a wider latitude? Where the young are entirely separated, during long and continuous periods, from the personal superintendence of their parents; where they are formed into societies composed of strangers and managed by strangers, their intercourse with home being thenceforth of an occasional if not desultory kind; it is obvious that in such cases, if education (in the highest and truest sense of the word) is to be carried on at all, it must be carried on, in part at least, at school: and the school which fails in the direct inculcation of the truths and requirements of revelation, is as defective, as culpable, as that which should disregard the health or the morals of those committed to its discipline. But there is another case with which the question of national education is more frequently and practically concerned. There are schools in which the teacher does not wholly supersede, for any one day, the exercise of parental discipline. The child starts from home in the morning, visits home ordinarily at noon, returns home in the evening. Only the hours of actual work are spent at school. Now surely, in a case like this, nothing but the neglected and degraded condition of so many English *homes* could even suggest, as an indispensable necessity, the transfer to the schoolmaster of the religious responsibilities of the parent. Who among the higher classes of society would scruple to send his child to an astronomical or historical lecturer, on the ground that no directly religious instruction would be combined with the information to be received? Nor do I see why the extension or multiplication of such lectures professing to communicate nothing but secular knowledge, professing to leave entirely to the parent or the pastor the religious instruction and training of the child, should make that an act of profaneness or of indifference, which, up to a certain point, all allow to be safe and Christian. Such is precisely the position occupied by a day-school, in which religious instruction is not *given* but has only *room left* for it.—*Dr. Vaughan.*

THE LAST TRIAL BY JURY.—This is an account of the trial and imprisonment of Mr. Holyoake in 1842-3. We have read it with pleasure and profit, because of its being a well-written history of a noble struggle. No matter what the opinions were which called forth such rancorous and bitter *law*; no matter if Mr. Holyoake assailed all that most of us hold dear of Christianity; his was a case of conscience, and he was entitled to that respect which is due to all true believers, of whatever sect, creed, or no-creed. We believe that he was wrong in his theology, and presented the not unfrequent case of one who judged the soundness of a doctrine by the conduct of its professors [This is not true.—ED.]; much in the manner of some who would destroy *all law* because there are *some* bad ones, or all government because there may be corrupt governors. We hope that the policy which would coerce the intellect is fast becoming obsolete; and that the trial of which this little book gives so good an account will indeed prove to be 'the last.'—*The People.*

### Pictures of Hell—their Source and Influence.

BY CHRISTOPHER.

'Things unknown are the true and natural subjects of imposture; their strangeness gets them credit, which exempts them from ordinary discussion.'—MONTAIGNE.

THE early painters of Italy were employed almost exclusively in the illustration of Catholic legends and gospel text. Amongst the first subjects prescribed by the priest, were pictures of hell. These pictures became so common in Italy, and other countries governed by the same creed, that it was barely possible to stir abroad in city or hamlet without being reminded of that infernal place, its amiable inhabitants, delectable properties, and beneficent regulations. The same subject continued to be painted, more or less ingeniously, until art reached its climax in Michael Angelo; and even that great man lent his genius to realise hell's fabled horrors. A conglomeration of viper, snake, toad, vulture, dragon, bat, crocodile, and flying fish, was set up with unblushing effrontery as a correct portrait of his Satanic Majesty, just as he would appear when in the act of pouncing upon his prey, even those unhappy wights whose behaviour on earth had not been approved of by their parish clergyman. His nondescript majesty was represented as keeping a large army, composed of individuals of a character with himself, barring some immaterial variations, probably introduced for the purpose of making distinctions betwixt the several companies, just as we distinguish one regiment of soldiers from another by their distinctive habiliments. Thus, there, were devils black, blue, yellow, green, and red; some with tails and horns, others without; some with claws, and others with hoofs. Yet they varied but little in the main: they were all ill-contrived and hideous enough to contemplate, and they all spouted wild fire from their mouths and nostrils with the same horrible facility, so that, seen in the distance on a murky night, we can imagine they would present an appearance as terrible as an army of Christians engaged after the fashion of modern warfare.

Early expounders of the gospel in paint not only signalised themselves by caricaturing his majesty the devil and his faithful followers, they even went

so far as to represent the vanquished monarch's residence, daubing 'eternal Damnation gulf' on the walls of the churches, both inside and outside, in order that the timid might know what sort of a home to expect in the event of their giving offence to their spiritual masters.

One cannot help tracing the similitudes betwixt the hell of the old painters and that of our modern Ranters. In coarse and vulgar details, and offensive personal particulars, there is a striking resemblance. Nor were those early representations of the fiery furnace exclusively confined to sacred edifices. We are assured by historians, that the joyous inhabitants of sunny Italy had to tolerate spectacles of this kind in their spring-time festivals. We have the particulars of a festival which the inhabitants of the suburb of San Friano were preparing on the 1st of May, about the year 1340.

The fiery gulf was to have been represented 'in boats on the Arno, when it chanced that the bridge of the Carraga, which was then of wood, gave way beneath the weight of the multitude who had crowded upon it to see the spectacle. Many lives were lost; and Buffalmacco [the painter] himself escaped only because, at the very moment when the bridge fell on the machinery intended to represent hell in boats on the Arno, he had gone from the place to purchase certain articles required for the show.\* Londoners of this day would think it very eccentric of the people of Chiswick if they were to get up a spectacle of hell upon the Thames. Fancy a score of superannuated coal barges, well cargoed with burning brimstone, tar, pitch, gunpowder, and resin, devoted to that purpose, these to come floating down the river under the management of a few score of bewildered boatmen a little the worse for drink; and then fancy as many clergymen threatening the people on the tow-path

\* See Vasari, Life of Buffalmacco; also Vinelli, Rom. Ed. of Vasari.

with a lodgment in another hell on a much more extensive scale, if they declined coming down handsomely with the pence. Fancy an attempt of this kind being made in sober, serious earnestness, the bedeviled boatmen cutting their clumsy capers around the floating fire, and the priests running to and fro, and crying out, as if 'mad or drunk,' and we get some idea of the tricks, the insults, to which a people of great natural gifts were subjected by the priest in days of old. Common sense has dispensed with the brimstone; the dabblers in real pitch and tar have slunk away, but there are not wanting those who still threaten, which is almost as objectionable as the old style of demonstration on the river Arno. For the money, we may have a more genteel, business-like, way of collecting that needful commodity in England, but there is no doubt that it is collected in sums quite as large as formerly, and avowedly for the same object; the only difference is, we are not allowed to see the devils (alias drunken boatmen), nor smell the brimstone.

To return to the pictorial exhibitions of the Infernal Pit. We have before us the description of one painted by Andrea Orgagna, about the year 1376, in the church of Santa Croce at Florence. Orgagna, if we are to judge by this work of his, must have sympathised heartily with his subject—must have been just the reverse of a generous, forgiving, disinterested painter. In the first place, he crowded his friends in Paradise, among the rest Clement VI. It may be remarked, this pontiff was a patron and great admirer of the artist. Likewise among the blessed is one Messer Dino del Garbo, the artist's physician. On the other side, among the condemned, is one Guardi, the beadle of Florence, who had in his official capacity distrained the painter's goods for a debt. This poor fellow 'the devils drag along by a hook;' the judge who presided, and the notary who acted in the case, are sharing the same treatment. But, worse than all, near to the last group, the devils have hold of a distinguished man, named Cecco d'Ascoli, an eminent mathematician, poet, and physician, who was publicly burnt in Florence for heresy on the 16th of September, 1327. And mark, it is recorded that the physician, the painter's friend,

Dino del Garbo, who has a place in paradise, was the accuser of the physician whom the painter has thrown into hell.\*

Leaving the pitiful and malignant effort of Orgagna, and the thousand cruder, though not less malignant, attempts of the early painters to people the everlasting bonfire, we will pass over a period of about one hundred years, which brings us to that Jupiter of painters Michael Angelo. In the Sistine Chapel is the Last Judgment, by his hand. The composition consists of about two hundred figures. 'The groups of the condemned, and the astonishing energy and variety of the struggling and suspended forms, are most fearful: and it is quite true that when contemplated from a distance the whole representation fills the mind with wonder and mysterious horror.†

We have before us an Italian print of the whole picture, and a large copy in oil of one of the groups condemned. We say, speaking only from feeble copies, never did we think it possible to torture the human frame into a semblance of such utter agony and despair as it is made to assume in the pictures before us, in the faces and forms of the falling damned, and in those which are already in the clutches of the infernal crew who have charge of the boat on the river below, which is seemingly of molten lead.

The Spanish, German, Flemish, and Dutch painters, were even more apt at infernal pictures than the Italian. Rubens has an altar-piece at Antwerp, entitled the 'Fall of the Damned,' which represents thousands of devils and human beings of every conceivable character. These come tumbling down into the fiery abyss; clouds of them, as far as the eye can reach, is one immense, apparently moving mass of human agony. This picture (some have hinted) the artist intended for a caricature, although he said to that effect to his pious employers; and, indeed, few can help laughing at some of the figures. The devils seem worked almost to death—crushed beneath the weight of aldermanic looking wretches, who are so heavily laden with fat as to require assistance. The whole of the forms are

\* Vasari, Life of Orgagno, and note. Bohn.

† Mrs. Jameson.

quite naked; and the women, who form the majority, of a very lewd description. The picture is atrociously vulgar and indecent, for the devils are playing all sorts of hellish tricks with their victims, most revolting to contemplate. There is a sort of dog Cerberus chained at the entrance of the pit or cavern, playing the part of porter. This animal is endowed with seven dragon-like heads, with huge maws, several of which are bolting human beings with as much indifference as ignorant people in England swallow quack boluses. On the outside of the cathedral at Antwerp, where this picture is exhibited, is a carved, gilt, and painted hell, which has a very striking effect, the damned being carved to the life, and presenting a great variety of mortal agony.

A contemporary of Rubens, named Brughel, devoted the whole of his life to painting the same description of subjects, and sold them very readily. This gentleman must have been the delight of ecclesiastics, as he was the terror of women and children. His companion, in consideration of his amiable disposition, distinguished him by the delicate cognomen of 'Hellish Brughel.' To this title we have no desire to add anything, providing it be understood to signify that he to whom it was applied was of a nature vulgar and depraved. More recently, that morbid, but learned artist, Barry, treated the members of the Society of Arts in London to a display of brimstone. His picture occupies one side of the hall in the Adelphi. There the morose painter has literally crammed elysium with noteables, including some of his own acquaintance, while others, whose lives had presented an unamiable contrast to the imaginative tyrant of the pencil, are seen tumbling headlong down to the other place.

Formerly, the livery in which the victims of the Inquisition in Spain and her colonies walked in procession, did penance, or suffered death by fire, were daubed all over, both the conical cap and long robe, with devils, imps, and tongues of fire.

In all the various pictures of this kind we have met with (several hundreds), the most predominant feature is that which the ancient philosophers would have designated a brutal fury, manifested in the triumph of cowardice and

ourelty. The devils are but men debased by vile passions to the level of the meanest brutes; their victims (the damned) present to us human nature sunk to the lowest state of impotence, beyond all pity and all consideration. Belief in the reality of such scenes of woe would tend to stifle every laudable aspiration, and make men callous to all earthly improvement. Fools and cowards are for the most part afflicted with forebodings of such a future, and to such tortures are terrible indeed. The Stoics of old said tortures were terrible only to cowards and fools; but those Stoics had little conception of the tortures familiar to Christians. If tortures, or the prospect of them, were terrible only to the imbecile, what man possessing a spark of humanity would not scorn to invent phantoms to terrify the weak and helpless? In how many instances might it not be said that fools, cowards, and idiots have been the dreadful consequences of religious persecution? When the church in her malice set up the dreaded rack, opened the boiling cauldrons, and spread out the pitched shirts, she made many who were of simple and harmless natures into fools, cowards, and idiots. Many a parish rate has been levied to support poor helpless wretches whose afflictions might have been traced to the sight of cruel exhibitions in Christian torture chambers. Innocent children fly from the scowl of the ruffian, and the unsophisticated virgin turns pale in the presence of the villain; so the loveliest and the gentlest of human kind are the sure victims of unnatural sights. Such have ever been the ready prey of the pestilent priest.

We little reckon on the dreadful influence exercised by fear over human nature. In times of pestilence and war infants perish in the womb; and women who would be examples of fortitude and 'ministering angels' in all ordinary afflictions, perish from mere apprehension of unnatural wrongs or suddenills, which no skill can avert, and which no amount of patience can subdue. So with hideous pictures of hereafter torments; they haunt alike the pillow of the matron and the maid, and fill with fearful dreams the slumbers of the child; and the rosy hours of youth are oft made wretched by the anxieties of age, and childhood loses half its charms. Death should

indeed be reckoned a calamity, and birth a misfortune, by those who give credence to the prognostications of Christian priests. Is there a weakness in all humanity?—there the priest triumphs. In moments when the body lies broken by repeated misfortunes, or when disease rages in every vein, the frightful theme of hell, rendered with all the aggravation of Christian license, might create apprehension in the most philosophic. No eye could look upon that prison house of fire and retain its human functions. Could the mind realise eternal bondage in such a place, the heart would cease to beat—stified within the breast. Even in the remoteness of the future, contemplating so much cruelty, ‘Charity is dumb, and virtue’s self stands scarcely unappalled.’

The only satisfaction to be found in tracing the history of these ideas of future punishments is, we discover no one fact to support them. ‘The dreams of sick men’ put into shape, and forced into repute by human ingenuity, are all we find; and we do not want proof that human ingenuity may be prostituted to almost any purpose, and that it is no very great difficulty to persuade a great part of mankind to give credit to very strange things. The Italian people have ever been afflicted by hordes of itinerant preachers, whose discourses commonly partake of a character with our Ranters. They are mostly very ignorant, and commonly hold forth at street corners and bye ways, the staple ingredients of their orations being stale traditions of the locality rendered with so much felicity by the painters we have cited. Thus, in addition to the pictorial treats, poor Italy has been favoured with verbal explanations. But, as a Swedish gentleman observed of Italians more than a hundred years ago, ‘The torments of the other world so often thundered in their ears, might be a curb to a people less acute, less hacknied in dissimulation, and less concerned to doubt of such a state.’

It is no matter for surprise that even in England people have become familiarised with a place which has so long been the theme of painters, poets, sculptors, and divines. Hell has become a vulgar household word. There is not a ruffian but who oftimes, in levity or in anger.

wishes his friend or foe a place in the hottest part thereof; not a faulty child but is forewarned of its torments; not a Christian priest but labours to strengthen the hideous fabrication.

The purgatory of the Roman Church is less hopeless than the sinner’s doom, as accredited by Protestants. The Protestant divine ignores that clause introduced by his scarlet rivals, by which a soul may even be redeemed from hell by the performance of certain rites on payment of money. Though it may be those rites were invented to enrich the church, they smack of mercy to those who have faith in them; but the doom of the Englishman’s church is irrevocable. The wealth of Great Britain could not purchase one unhappy sinner a drop of water to appease his raging thirst, nay, not even furnish him the privilege to make known his sufferings; he is as one condemned to a perpetual rack with his tongue cut out. Thus we see that the Roman Catholic account of hereafter punishment is more considerate and humane than the Protestant’s.

Father Pinamonti, in his work ‘Hell Opened to Christians’ (examined a short time since by the editor of this paper), gave us to understand that *his* fraternity had no disposition to break up the venerable piece of machinery; and it is known to all that that graceless brotherhood, the Ranters, consider a sermon tame indeed which does not include an half hour’s steaming declamation on the ecstatic bliss of being steeped in to the lips in fire. That must be a strange place indeed, the bare idea of which makes a man fume and hiss and rave and rant, and present those distressing symptoms peculiar to Ranters.

There is no important difference between the ceed of the Ranter and High Churchman. The latter wears a placid mask-like face, reads from a book in measured syllables, and elucidates his theme as complacently as if it were a classical fiction of interest only to the scholar and the gentleman. He is heard without emotion, and when his discourse is ended, his hearers go to their repasts with no sort of anxiety on their minds. We need hardly add that it is with this large, respectable class of preachers that the rising generation will have to discuss the doctrine of hereafter punishments.

### Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

### THE LATE JOSEPH SPENCE, OF HEATON.

SIR,—On the second of June last died Joseph Spence, of Heaton, near Bradford, Yorkshire, aged 75 years.

He was one of that extensively spread but misrepresented sect which is everywhere spoken against as 'infidel.' When about twenty-five years old, he became a member of the sect of 'particular Baptists,' and continued to be a respected member for nearly thirty years. About this period the memorable strike of the wool-combers and weavers, for the purpose of obtaining a *rise* in their wages, took place, and continued for upwards of half a year; and before or about its termination about eighty banks broke, and a *panic*, perhaps the severest within the memory of any man now living, took place, the result of which was excessive distress among the working classes. Our friend Spence was, along with thousands more, involved in the general distress arising from want of employment; yet such was his attachment to his religious prepossessions, that he determined to discharge some arrears due from him for his chapel sittings, though his family should suffer from it, and want, as they did, some of the pressing necessities of life. He paid his chapel debt, told his simple tale of woe, and received the pity of the pew rent takers in return.

The destitute condition of his family at this time, combined with other matters, induced our friend Spence to reflect seriously on his prospects, both physical and religious; and he began to think that it was as much his duty to provide for the wants of the body as for those of the soul. He was resolved not to subject himself to the reproach of St. Paul, who says that a man who does not provide for his own is worse than an infidel. The incessant clamour of religious bodies for pecuniary support for the soul, and the depreciating manner in which care for the body was treated, produced a fearless inquiry into the reasons on which their claims were based, and the result was his emancipation from the trammels and terrors of superstition. He lived for twenty years a moral and consistent life, and died, as he had lived, without fear and with an unspotted reputation.

Our friend Spence was a kind husband, a tender father, and an excellent neighbour. After he separated himself from the religious sect of which he had been a member for so long a period, he became extremely solicitous for information, and would travel frequently four or five miles of an evening to attend public meetings or lectures. He has travelled fifteen or twenty miles on a Sunday to public meetings for religious discussion, with an appetite that 'grew with what it fed on.' The ideas he acquired during the last twenty years of his life appeared to afford him much consolation, and his end was peace. Even his religious acquaintance and neighbours, though regretting the waywardness of his views, uniformly spoke with respect of his moral qualities and personal kindness. During the latter part of his life, and when suffering from affliction, he expressed his desire that no religious ceremony should be performed over him, as he was aware that in some cases ministers of the gospel indulged in unwarrantable remarks on the death of an unbeliever. His daughter and her husband were both religious, but behaved to the old man during his illness with great kindness. A nephew of our friend Spence, about six months before he died, and while suffering from illness, introduced a young gentleman who was studying divinity at Edinburgh, who

advised Spence to endeavour to change his opinions and embrace the student's, as such a change was the only means to enjoy happiness. 'And I,' said the old man, 'should like you to embrace my opinions, as they only can confer solid happiness.' This was said so cheerfully, that the student said no more; but being afterwards asked if he thought that Spence was happy, the student's answer was that he thought he was.

The well-known profession of our friend Spence on religious subjects, and the openness with which he invited inquiries as to the state of his mind prior to his death, prevented the circulation of the usual stories of an infidel's death-bed repentance; and such was the morality of his habits that the pious Christians could find no peg on which to hang the slanderous tale of a vicious life and a dreadful death.

JOSEPH PICKARD.

#### EXTRAORDINARY DISTRIBUTION OF THE 'REASONER.'

SIR,—Two lectures have been recently delivered in this town, one on 'God's Order in respect to Man,' by the Rev. George Steward, and another on 'Divine Revelation,' by the Rev. Dr. Beaumont. Both these gentlemen belong to the Wesleyan body, and have lately grown very popular by their advocacy of Church Reform, and the strong sympathy they have exhibited for those whom the Conference has expelled. On both nights the meeting was large, consisting chiefly of religious persons from the various sects and denominations. As regards the character of the lectures, they differed little from those generally delivered by ministers. They combated an infidelity which had no existence, and answered objections which were never made. They declaimed where they should have endeavoured to prove, and denounced where they should have striven to convince. They touched on no departments of knowledge without committing the most egregious mistakes. Not only did they abound in errors in history, science, and theology, but many of their passages contained the most glaring inconsistencies. They pretended to be liberal yet they breathed a spirit of intolerance; they preached modesty, yet they displayed the greatest presumption; they enforced habits of correctness, yet they frequently contradicted themselves; they showed a supreme contempt for atheism, yet they neither understood the meaning of its principles nor the nature of its policy; they uttered the most common-place remarks for the profoundest of truths, and ascribed theories and assertions to their opponents which they utterly repudiate. The objections of these ministers were neither ably conceived, wisely designed, nor cleverly expounded. In tone, temper, and argument, they were more adapted to the past than the present. You felt that they would be extraordinary lectures were their performance equal to their pretensions. You rose from their delivery more disgusted than delighted, more confirmed in your principles than convinced of their errors. Yet, with all their faults, they serve a purpose. They proved how little could be said in favour of religion, even by two of its most educated and hired supporters.

Having given you a brief description of the lectures, allow me to call your attention to those who listened to them. If the character of the former was bad, the conduct of the latter was worse. This may appear strange to some, but the whole affair may be stated in a few words. On each night a person was employed to distribute the *Reasoner* to those leaving the Hall. At first he was kindly assisted by one of the door-keepers, that gentleman being so ignorant of the *Reasoner's* principles as to imagine he was promoting the circulation of a religious publica-



tion. But, on his discovering the mistake, which was soon brought about by the exclamations of the bystanders, he instantly flew into a passion. What must be done? This was too much for a Christian to bear. It is very horrible to read atheistical works, but to aid in their distribution amongst a religious audience is one of those sins which is not forgiven in this world, nor in that which is to come. In this extremity a voice is heard—not a voice from heaven, but a voice from the crowd. ‘Put him out,’ exclaimed a pious brother. So the boy was ordered into the street, with the remark, ‘We will have no infidelity here; we have to pay for the room, and no person shall occupy it but ourselves.’ The latter part of this assertion was exceedingly foolish, as the boy had never attempted to enter the room. He was ordered to stand on one side of the passage, a command which he strictly observed, where he could not offer the least obstruction. On his reaching the streets, he met with a kinder reception. There stood around the door a number of freethinkers, who quickly rendered him all the assistance they could. But here occurred a scene which I shall never forget. On his presenting the *Reasoner*, the wildest passions were awaked, and the grossest language employed. We are told by the Christians that they are naturally depraved, that none are righteous, no not one; and certainly they did much on this occasion to verify these pious sayings. Some received the *Reasoner* in the language of insult, others threw it back in the face of the giver; many tore it into pieces, and trampled it under their feet; and nearly all displayed a spirit of bigotry and intolerance. On my passing through the streets a short time after, I found them literally strewed with *Reasoners* that had been torn and thrown away. In fine, these Christian and truth-seeking persons on their way home had scattered them north, east, west, and south.

You here perceive that religious intolerance is not confined to Whitehaven. It may exhibit itself more violently in that town, but it exists wherever Christianity exists. One is a natural consequence of the other. Our opponents may stoutly deny the truth of these assertions. They may gravely inform us that Christianity is love, that it is averse to bigotry, that it repudiates persecution, that it condemns all such conduct as described in this letter. But we ask them for proof. Can they refer us to a single nation professing Christianity that has not persecuted, tortured, and destroyed? Can they point us to a single sect, either at home or abroad, that does not exhibit a spirit of intolerance? Intolerance and Christianity walk hand in hand—like the substance and the shadow, where one goes the other will follow. For my own part, I am fond of beholding such scenes as these, so long as they are confined to tearing and trampling on the *Reasoner*. To my mind they are ominous of something better. Nothing exhibits so much the weakness of our opponents. Men generally grow intolerant when unable to argue, and fly to persecution when they cannot convince. Let it be our object to set a better example. If they present us with a tract, let us kindly receive it; and if we find it contains error, as kindly expose it. Let us look upon them as mistaken men who have been corrupted by education, and led astray by false principles. If they tear our pamphlets and spurn our instruction, let us not despair, but rather adopt the advice of the poet—

‘Teach them as if you taught them not,  
And things propose as new as things forgot.’

## LORD PALMERSTON ON FREE EXPRESSION OF OPINION.

At a dinner given to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Tiverton, on the 15th of September, that nobleman (being in one of his happiest moods) repeated many fine things which he had before had occasion to tell sundry distinguished foreigners who had come to see the Exhibition in Hyde Park. His lordship's observations related to the political, religious, and social condition of the English people. He was especially boastful of one fact, which was that the gigantic Exhibition would be brought to a close without having caused the slightest 'internal commotion or interruption to social order,' and he dilated on the repose England had enjoyed from the absence of revolutions, which had been the bane of continental nations. He grew eloquent on the impartial manner of administering justice in this country. He said justice was administered here 'without favour or affection,' and 'without influence to sway it.' He commented on the absence of the military in our streets, and the peace being kept by a few 'civil policemen,' who carry 'little sticks in their hands instead of sabres by their sides;' he took particular credit to the government, of which he is the pillar, for their readiness and ability in removing abuses as soon as any are discovered and have received mature deliberation; and he further went on to expatiate on the most desirable state of things now existing in this happy land, complimenting the English people in general on possessing an extraordinary amount of good sense, goodness of heart, and many other noble qualities. And the captivating Minister for Foreign Affairs told his Tiverton admirers that he had told all those things to many illustrious foreigners in the course of the summer, assuring them that such a friendly disposition, existing both on the part of the governors and the governed, was the cause of such charming order which prevailed everywhere in England, and which had struck the aforesaid illustrious foreigners with such agreeable surprise; and he remarked the Americans in particular were agreeably disappointed and charmed with the delicate way we have of managing all our affairs, political, religious, and social. And one reason above all others which the eloquent head of Foreign Affairs gave for this delectable state of things, was the privilege enjoyed by Englishmen of giving free expression to their opinions. These are the noble lord's words:—'Then, I said, another reason for this happy state is this, that every man here is at liberty to express his opinions, whatever they be. If he is wrong, he is met by those who are right; if he is right, he convinces those who are wrong. The conflict of opinion is a quiet warfare always going on, and leads to the happiest results.'

And thus the noble lord ran on, and his well-fed audience thought they never heard such a heavenly oration in all the days of their lives. They had not the slightest idea till the delectable discourse of their accomplished guest what a glorious thing it was to be a Briton. The last piece of information about freely and openly avowing one's opinions, 'whatever they be,' left nothing to be desired. The feasters thought they had purchased the privilege of dining with his lordship far too cheaply, and in goodness of heart they conceived all sorts of beautiful designs in silver and gold; snuff boxes, tea services, and things of that sort, floated before their eyes as suitable presents to that distinguished personage.

To the last cause assigned by Lord Palmerston for the charming political and social atmosphere of Albion, we wish to call particular attention. We are pleased the great Exhibition will pass off without occasioning any disturbance—we never expected such a calamity. We esteem that policy which keeps the military within barracks, when they would only create a riot if they were let loose in the streets;

we admire civil policemen, for we like to be set moving by a genteel and considerate process; we think 'a little stick' a weapon sufficiently formidable with which to entrust such policemen, for persuasion is better than force: we should like to give the government credit for putting down abuses, but we think that body more apt at creating abuses than in putting them down. We believe the English people to possess many noble qualities, and Lord Palmerston right in acknowledging them. We have very little to urge against anything the noble lord said to his foreign guests, or to the people at Tiverton; what he said was very well, very well said, very amiable, and very excusable after a good dinner. Many good things are said in after dinner speeches, and afterwards forgotten. Lord Palmerston said good things after the dinner at Tiverton about 'the free expression of opinion,' and we have a particular desire that what he said on so important a subject shall not be forgotten. He said, 'the people of England have perfect liberty to express their opinions, whatever they be.' Let freethinkers and reformers of all kinds remember Lord Palmerston's words. We have no desire to contradict his lordship, and we trust he will never do anything to contradict himself. CHRISTOPHER.

### Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Acknowledged in No. 271, 705s. 6d.—Mr. Sievwright, Derby, 2s.—R. Paterson, 2s.—W. B. Camden Town, 2s. 6d.—Mr. Hunter, 5s.—Per Mr. Wynn, of Ashton-under-Lyne, from friends in that neighbourhood, as follows:—J. Hudfield, 1s. 6d.; W. Meadowcroft, 1s. 6d.; L. Greenwood, 1s.; J. Greenwood, 1s.; C. Greenwood, 1s.; B. Greenwood, 1s.; W. Horner, 1s.; W. Carter, 1s.; E. Lawton, 1s.; W. Orme, 1s.; W. Pollitt, 1s.; E. Greaves, 1s.; B. Swire, 1s.; J. Stafford, 1s.; G. Wynn, 1s.; J. Leech, 1s.; T. Oldham, 1s.; S. Shawcross, 1s.; J. Hepworth, 1s.; T. Wilcocks, 6d.; A. Artingstall, 6d.; B. Scott, 6d.; J. Mellor, 6d.; J. Bolton, 6d.; S. Smith, 6d.; J. Higson, 6d.—Mr. Henshaw, Manchester 1s.—Total, 741s. 6d.

### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Oct. 19th [7½], Ernest Jones, 'Hungary in the Past.' October 21st [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room. Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Oct. 19th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

Wardour St., Soho.—Oct. 16th [8], Mr. John B. Lenox, 'Education.'

Hall of Science, City Road.—Oct. 19th [7], Thomas Shorter, 'How to prevent Pauperism.'

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [8], Discussion. Oct. 19th [7], Thornton Hunt, Esq., 'Where is the People's Land and the People's Food?'

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday [8], a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

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## Our Open Page.

MR. JOHN BOWEN writes:—Some weeks ago you informed the Paddington readers of the *Reasoner* that they could be supplied at my establishment. At that time my sale was eight copies weekly; since that time they have been continually exposed to public view, with bill of contents at my door. The result is that my sale is now from twenty-six to thirty copies weekly. I have likewise sold ten dozens of the 'Logic of Death.' This has been done in a part of the town where formerly if you wanted the *Reasoner*, you had to order it beforehand, and thence see it taken from a drawer like some forbidden thing.

It is related of an old Highland woman, who came trudging an immense distance over the hills, having heard that Lord John Russell was to be at the kirk on Sunday last. What thinks the reader was her errand? She had heard that Lord Johnny was the 'Prime Meenister' of all England, and she 'expeckit to hear him hold forth in a shoobleme discourse.'

W. Whitehead may obtain the *Freethinker's Magazine*. The other answer will be given on Mr. Holyoake's return from the country.

L. M. S. 'The best course to pursue is to ask Mr. B. Wale (we are interested to know) his authority for the statement respecting Modern Socialists.

Lady Capel's Wharf. Since the neighbours of this correspondent are, as he states, illiterate people, perhaps it would not be well to bandy words with them; left to their own reflections, they may come to think and act more justly.

The *Christian Socialist*, of October 4th, contains a very able article, entitled 'The Ladies' Guild,' of value to those interested in the formation of 'Associated Homes.'

The *Boston Investigator* says:—Not long since, in South Carolina, a clergyman was preaching on the disobedience of Jonah, when commanded to go and preach to the Ninevites. After expatiating for some length of time on the truly awful consequence of disobedience to the Divine commands, he exclaimed in a voice of thunder, that passed through the congregation like an electric shock, 'and are there any Jonahs here?' There was a negro present whose name was Jonah; who, thinking himself called on, immediately arose, and, turning up his white eye to the preacher, with his broadest grin, and best bow, very readily answered, 'Here be one, Massa!'

The *Boston Investigator* says:—A Frenchman, who had lately arrived in this country, attended a short time since an 'anxious meeting,' in a neighbouring town, and, as is customary at such places, was asked the question—'Have you ever been born again?' He replied, with much gravity, 'No, saire, I have not, my fader died before I vas told it vas necessary, so I never have had an opportunity.

☞ Monthly Parts of the *Reasoner* are uniformly ready in a double Supplementary Wrapper every Magazine day. Volumes of the *Reasoner* are made up (and can be had bound) Half Yearly.

☞ For all other notices of Business, Correspondence, Propagandism, Lists of Agents, Duties of Readers, on Writing for the Press, &c., see Supplementary (double) Wrapper of Monthly Parts.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## THE DEATH OF MRS. EMMA MARTIN.

[We have lost the most important woman that stood on our side; but one whose example was such as may cause her place to be supplied—and the highest order of example is that which perpetuates its own force. Mrs. Emma Martin died at her country residence, Hollyville Cottage, Finchley Common, on Wednesday afternoon, October 8th, 1851, in the presence of her second husband, her second daughter Louisa, and her medical attendant, Mr. George Bird. Anxious that her family might not be distressed, she concealed from all the approach of death till half an hour before it happened, when she said to her husband, 'It is all over.' Seeing the violent grief which he and Louisa manifested, she, after she had become unable to speak, waved her hand deprecatingly of their sorrow, and expressive of her desire that they should not give way to it.

For the past year she had suffered from 'Phthisis,' the secondary disease being described as 'Phenmo-thorax.' When in London a fortnight before her death, I devoted one of the four days of my stay in town to a visit to Finchley. As we entered her room (Mrs. Holyoake was with me), Mrs. Martin wept. It was impossible not to see that suffering had made fatal inroads upon her when she, so unused to tears, wept at the sight of friends. I never saw her look so beautiful. Here dark black eyes were radiant with fire, and the hectic vermilion which suffused her cheeks imparted a supernatural beauty to her expression. Strauss's 'Life of Jesus' lay upon her bed. She had the second volume in her hand. She said she had been examining it, and she conversed about it critically for some minutes—when her intermittent breath permitted. Her chief remark was, that it was less direct and cogent than it might have been, and much that Strauss sought to explain rationally was not worth the trouble.

On leaving, I promised to see her in three weeks, intending to abridge my journey within that period, my impression being that I should then return before her death, as I remarked to a friend on returning home. She died eight days after.

Some time before she explained to me particulars she wished observed in case of her death, and she stipulated that her likes and dislikes should be respected at her grave. Neither from persons nor Societies who had neglected her, or had been unfriendly to her, would she accept attentions when dead which had been withheld when living. (Here courage and independence never forsook her.) These requests were strictly fulfilled, and as she wished me to speak at her grave I did so.

On Sunday, the 12th, I again went to Finchley. As I removed the lid from the coffin, the family stood round, when the scene of distress which occurred was as painful as witnessing a second death. And so uncontrolable was the grief experienced, that it was found necessary to prevent Mr. Joshua Hopkins, Louisa, and Mrs. Holyoake (between whom and Mrs. Martin there subsisted the attachment of sisters) from being present at the funeral.

Mrs. Martin has left four daughters, Elizabeth, Louisa, Emma, and Manon, named so after Madame Roland.

The funeral took place on Tuesday afternoon, October 14th, at Highgate Cemetery. Elizabeth, Emma, Mr. William Hopkins, and myself, occupied the first mourning coach. Mr. George Wood, Mr. James Watson, publisher, 'Undecimus,' 'Eugene,' and Mr. Langabeer, occupied the second. Mr. George Bird, the medical attendant (a valued friend of the family) was prevented by professional engagements from being present. I obtained permission to buy the grave in the name of friends of the *Reasoner*, who were anxious to give this public proof of their estimation of Mrs. Martin, and her many friends in the provinces will also wish to share in the last grateful duty of erecting a tablet to her memory.

As the visitor enters the Cemetery (from Kentish Town), in Swain's Lane, he observes on the right a narrow walk through close trees—it leads to the unconsecrated ground. On issuing from the verdant defile there is on the left an elevated spot, overlooking the country round. In the centre is a cluster of trees. Close under the shade of those trees we laid her, and by the side of the grave spoke the words which follow.]

THE sentiments to be expressed here can add nothing to that known and felt by those who stand around. But sometimes relief comes in sorrow, by telling that to each other which we ourselves do know. Besides, the nature of this occasion lends authenticity to that which may be repeated to others, caring to know what are our thoughts at this hour.

The story we have to tell, is brief and sad. A life so useful, closed at 39 years, is sad; yet the sadness has a joy with it. For 'life is as a drama,' and, as Mrs. Martin herself used to repeat, 'it matters not how *long* it has been acted, but how *well*.' How well she performed her part we know, and, on that ground, rejoice. An opening, beautiful in energy and passion, followed by a struggle ever chequered, and the end a tragedy—but the end was an example, and carried with it a noble moral. Such is the history of her from whom we part this day.

A childhood of religious training and secular neglect, alternately distracted and confined a spirit it could not guide, and Emma Martin, endowed with fine powers and with the capacity of free-thought, was taught to accept this world as a transition state, where there awaits each inhabitant a Providence-apportioned human lot, to which is annexed the inexorable condition of a dogmatic and unchangeable creed. Her early writings present the suggestive spectacle, common among the higher order of minds, of one theoretically eulogistic of her own captivity, and impulsively escaping from it with unconscious gladness. But her lot, no less than her creed, was destined to be renounced by her. Allied to a husband (found in the religious circle in which she was reared in Bristol) whose company it was a humiliation to endure, she ultimately, even when she was the mother of three children, refused to continue to submit to it. This, though afterwards made a reproach to her, was so justifiable, that even her religious friends found no fault with it. Her 'Remembrances' of this period are best expressed in her own words:—

But hours of agony and years of pain  
Have been my portion in this weary life;  
'Tis well the *past* may ne'er return again,  
Whatever be my *future* care or strife.

After long struggling (such as only a mother can maintain) to support her children unaided, she was united to another husband (Mr. Joshua Hopkins), her former one yet living. Though no marriage ceremony was performed, or could be performed (such is the moral state of our law which denies divorce to all who are wronged, if they happen to be also indigent), yet no affection was ever purer, no union ever more honourable to both

parties, and the whole range of priest-made marriages never included one to which happiness belonged more surely, upon which respect could dwell more truly.

Our first knowledge of Mrs. Martin was as an opponent of Socialism. But as soon as she saw intellectual truth in it, she paused in her opposition to it. Long and serious was the conflict the change in her convictions caused her; but her native love of truth prevailed, and she came over to the advocacy of that she had so resolutely and ably assailed. And none who ever offered us alliance rendered us greater service, or did it at greater cost. Beautiful in expression, quick in wit, strong in will, eloquent in speech, coherent in conviction, and of stainless character, she was incomparable among public women. She was one of the few among the early advocates of English Socialism who saw that the combat against religion could not be confined to an attack on forms of faith—to a mere comparison of creeds, and she attached only a secondary importance to the abuses of Christianity, where she saw that the whole was an abuse of history, reason, and morality. Thus was she cut off from all hope or sympathy from her former connections, and she met with but limited friendships among her new allies. She saw further than any around her what the new Communism would end in. She saw that it would establish the healthy despotism of the affections, in lieu of the factitious tyrannies of custom and parliament. She embraced the Communist theory because she saw no licentiousness was included in it; and she drew an austere line between liberty and license, which made her repulsive to all the vague (a rather large class in all new parties). But what was thoroughly innocent she wished to be frankly avowed, and lived out modestly. And here again she was almost alone. For those who were unable to see clearly where the line of demarcation lay, were afraid of being drawn too far—for not understanding themselves, they were naturally alarmed lest they should be misunderstood by others; and Mrs. Martin presented all her life the paradox of being at once the terror of the timid and the bold. Only those understood her character who came within the sphere of her influence, or discerned it by insight. Over the whole country there are many who will hear of her death as a public calamity, and she had some cherished friendships among those who are only attracted by genius or won by worth; but they were of such persons as could not well be near her, and she died at Finchley Common comparatively alone, in that retreat which she had sought in her energy and in her pride, disdaining that opponents should witness that suffering they had no wish to alleviate. Able to die in the principles in which she lived, she sunk (just as the first rays of prosperity began to break on her life), too wise to murmur, and too brave to fear. The nature of her opinions, which arose in conviction and not in antagonism, will best be seen in two passages from her writings at two remarkable periods of her life.

In 1835 she wrote in the *Bristol Literary Magazine*, which she edited, 'Infidelity is the effusion of weak minds, and the resource of guilty ones. Like the desolating simoom of the desert, it withers everything within its reach, and as soon as it has prostrated the morality of the individual, it invades the civil rights of society.'

In 1844, in the Seventh of her Weekly Addresses to the Inhabitants of London, of which it was the 36,000th issued, she wrote, 'When Christianity arose it gathered to its standard the polished Greek, the restless Roman, the barbarous Saxon, but it was suited only to the age in which it grew. It had anathemas for the bitter hearted to hurl at those they chose to designate "God's enemies." It had promises for the hopeful, cautions for the prudent, charity for the good. It was all things to all men. It became the grand leader—of the ascetic to the convent, of the chivalrous to the crusade, of the cruel to the Star Chamber, of the scholar to the secret midnight cell, there to feed on knowledge, but not to impart it. But at last its contentional doctrines bade men look elsewhere for *peace*—for some less equivocal morality, some clearer doctrines, some surer truth.' In this belief she lived, worked, and taught, and in this belief she died.

And passing to the kingdom of the inscrutable Future, whose credentials could she better take with her than those she had won by her courage and truthfulness? Should they be Pagan, Buddhist, Mahometan, Christian, or of morose sectarian shade? Credentials soiled with age, torn in strifes, stained with blood! On the threshold of the undefined Future, where all who have gone before are afar off and out of sight, where none can accompany us to counsel or inform, where each enters a stranger and alone, what passport can be so authentic as a love of humanity undarkened by hate, a passion for truth, always pure—the tribute of labour that never rested, and a conscience that cherished no guile?

Will any who calumniate the last hours of Freethinkers utter the pious fraud over this narrow bed, and the memory of Emma Martin be distorted, as have been those of Paine and Voltaire? Does the vision of these outrages glare upon this grave?—outrages too ignoble to notice, too painful to recognise? Heed them not: believe them not! Let not the Christian insult her whom only the grave has vanquished. Let him not utter the word of that triumph over the dead, before whom living his coward tongue would falter. Let his manliness teach him truth, if his creed has failed to teach him courtesy.

As a worker for human improvement, Mrs. Martin was as indefatigable as efficient. From the time when she published 'The Exiles of Piedmont,' to the issue of her Essay on 'God's Gifts and Man's Duties,' and, later still, she wrote with ardour, always manifesting force of personal thought, and, what is more unusual in the writings of women, strength and brevity of expression. Her lectures were always distinguished by the *instruction* they conveyed, and the earnestness with which they were delivered; and in courage of advocacy, and in the thoroughness of view, no woman, except Frances Wright, is to be compared with her; and only one, whose name is an affectionate household word in our land\* (greater, indeed, in order of power), resembles Mrs. Martin in largeness and sameness of speculation, and the capacity to treat purely social and womanly questions. She had that strength of will which rules in all spheres, but ever chastened by womanly feeling. She had an affectionate nature which astonished those who knew her in private, as much as her resolution often astonished those who knew her in public. Indeed, she was the most womanly woman of all the public advocates of 'Women's Rights.' Her assertion of her claim to interfere in public affairs, was only a means of winning security from outrage for the domestic affections. She would send the mother into the world; not in the desertion of motherly duties, but to learn there what the motherly duties are—which are not to submit in ignorance to suckle slaves, but to learn how to rear free men, and intelligent and pure women.

To some these will sound as the words of eulogy, which admiration utters and friendship believes, but they will be found to bear investigation. Deeming that the profession of an accoucheur was properly one for women, she qualified herself for it with that intellectual conscientiousness which distinguished her. She attended lectures, spent days and nights in hospitals for months together, and went through a long and patient practice. To all pursuits she united the Scholar's conscience to the Reformer's emulation. To her own party she was an inspiration, and had more leisure and means been allotted her, her resources and invention would have added largely to its influence. She would have been our Madame Roland, whom she greatly admired and much resembled in character, talent, and the ambition of a wise empire. Yet in that very respect in which society owes her most, it will, such is its prejudice, acknowledge the least. Yet, thanks to her exertions, the reign has been shortened of that Retaliative Theology, which, like a dark cloud, spreads itself over existence and obscures the sunlight of human duty. When Death

\* Harriet Martineau.



asserts his inexorable dominion, and the anguish of separating affection blanch the cheeks, when even the dumb brute betrays inarticulate sympathy: in the presence of Death, where the grossest natures are refined, where rude lips spontaneously distil the silvery words of sympathy, and the unfeeling volunteer acts of mercy—in that hour when tyranny itself pauses in its pursuit of vengeance, when the tempest of passion is stilled, and the injured forgive, and hate is subdued to love, and insensibility to affection, can that be the moment chosen by a 'God of Love' in which to commence the execution of a purpose which humanity could not conceive without terror, nor contemplate without dismay? Ah! what do we not owe to a woman who, like Emma Martin, takes the heroic side, and teaches us in her last hour, the truth of a gentler faith? And if we do but pierce beneath the antagonism from which all development issues, we shall see how, both with the Christian and the Freethinker, the same intention is ever at the bottom. We perceive a principle from different points, trace it to different roots, explain it in a different language, maintain it for different reasons, and foresee for it different conclusions: but the conflict continued, sometimes darkly, sometimes wildly, is for *one* morality and for *one* truth; and if there be in the end a Judge who looks with an equal eye on all, he will not fail to discern the motive and pardon the means.

We may estimate very highly the singular example Mrs. Martin set by the opinions she developed and the firmness with which she maintained them—so unusual in the history of women. Sympathy is the great sustainer of all that is human, and it is the air which woman breathes. To step out of the current of opinion at the call of truth into the narrow circle of personal conviction, and accept the accidental and tardy appreciation of the few, in lieu of the ready regard of millions, is a sacrifice that few are equal to; but it is one which converts life into a poem; it is the tribute which only superior natures make to mankind; it is one which posterity remembers, and for which the freed, for all time, devoutly thank the giver. Mrs. Martin is added to the calendar of those who have served the people, who in life and death have been their teachers. Her last wish was that none should mourn for her—her last hope that none should rest in the cause to which she devoted herself. Let any who would honour her memory learn the same cheerful courage, and render some like service with like intrepidity.

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[As in Scotland and England several times false 'Recantations' have been published of Mrs. Martin, and 'Death-bed Repentances' got up and circulated by the religious, this short memorial will be of use as an authentic history of her last days. It will be issued in a separate form for the convenience of those friends who may wish to circulate it among the clergy whom Mrs. Martin combated in so many places.]

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### GOD ON EVERYBODY'S SIDE.

'God on our side' is the universal cry. Each of two conflicting nations consecrates its flags; and whichever conquers sings a Te Deum. Attila conceived himself to have a 'divine claim to the dominion of the earth:' the Spaniards subdued the Indians under plea of converting them to Christianity; hanging thirteen refractory ones in honour of Jesus Christ and his apostles: and we English justify our colonial aggressions by saying that the Creator intends the Anglo-Saxon race to people the world!—*Spencer's Social Statics.*

### Examination of the Press.

THE SAINT AND THE FISHERMAN.—St. Columba is the patron saint of the salmon, and many a good turn has he done them. For instance, at Rose Isle, where you lost that fine fish yesterday, instead of the two falls you see now, there once was but one step from the top to the bottom; and you may easily conceive that no fish that ever was spawned could take the leap. But the tender-hearted saint, grieving at their fruitless toil, and pitying their battered sides as they fell back into the whirling cauldron below, prayed away a good piece of the rock, and gave them that easy, comfortable staircase which you see this day. In good truth, St. Columba was a very worthy saint when his bristles were not up; but Irish saints are apt to be peppery, and I am sure Job himself could not be expected to stand the loss of his dinner. Still I must confess that the story I am going to tell is not quite so much to the saint's credit as the last was. Hungry and tired was the worthy saint, as he came down that steep, rugged pathway, that leads from the Captain's Rock. Hard at work had he been all day, 'preaching of sermons and singing of psalms,' and many were the heathens he had converted, and many were the wild Irishmen that he had clipped of their wings. But lips, though holy, must still be fed; and as Cockburn's Hotel was not then established at Ballyshannon, the saint began to have serious misgivings about his dinner, when, to his joy, he saw, seated on the wing of that Danish eel-weir (where I saw you the other day, looking so like a Leprechaun), a jolly fisherman, and at his feet a goodly number of glittering salmon. 'Bestow thine alms, stranger,' said the saint; 'bestow a salmon for the sake of our Lady on a poor saint, who stands an excellent chance of going to bed supperless.' The man must have been a presbyterian or a poor-law guardian, that is certain, for he told the holy man to go work for his livelihood. Could flesh and blood stand that? Work for his livelihood! when the saint had already baptized more heathens than the sinner had hairs on his head; and St. Columba an Irish saint, too! It would have been quite consistent with his country had he upped with his pilgrim-staff, and broken the man's heretical head; but St. Columba thought that this would be uncanonical. He always was a stickler for church discipline, so he pulled out his book and he cursed him heartily instead: he cursed him by hanging and drowning, he cursed him by fire and water, and (which was somewhat superfluous) he cursed the throw for his sake; and having thus given him a cast of his clerical office, he passed on in holy meditation. The next man who came down that rocky path saw a terrible sight. The uncharitable fisherman, who had hooked his fly in a tree above his head, had climbed up to free it, and his foot slipping, his neckhandkerchief had performed the office of a hempen cravat; while, the fire he had lighted to broil his fish, having consumed the foot of the tree, the whole had bent forward into the stream, leaving the dead bodybobbing up and down in the current like a fisherman's float; and in that throw, beautiful and tempting as it seems, and numerous as are the ignorant and unbelieving tyros who have wet their lines there, not one single salmon has risen from that time to this. 'There, what do you think of such a curse as that? St. Columba was no fool of a saint, I assure you.'—'What must we think of such a religion as this,' said the matter-of-fact Scholar, 'whose very legends teach revenge, and whose holy deeds are murder?' Now the Scholar, who had come from the Black North, was a bitter Protestant, and hated holy water to a degree exceeded by one gentleman only, who shall be nameless; he did not above half like the parson's cut at the Presbyterians, and was savage accordingly. 'Steady, there—steady, my little Derry Prentice,' said the captain; 'the floor has cracks in it. Besides, you're wrong; the church can bless as well as curse. St. Columba did get a dinner that day from Cassidy of Bundoran, and in recompense secured the entail of that fishery to him and his family for ever; and you know that the man who gave us leave to fish there is a Cassidy every inch of him, to this day; and, moreover, the river there is in season eleven months in the year. Saints have gratitude!'—*The Erne, its Legends and its Fly-fishing.* By the Rev. H. Newland. Chapman.

### The Government of the Laws of Nature.

BY F. B. BARTON, B.A.

[WE continue the publication of these admirable essays by Mr. Barton, and from time to time we shall present other 'Reasoner Tracts' from MSS. he has done us the honour to forward to us. Some of these essays were Lectures originally delivered at South-place Chapel, London. Their thoroughness of view, great clearness of statement, and succinct illustration, it is not necessary that we point out to the reader, who will agree with us, that these papers are valuable contributions to the literature of the questions discussed in this journal.—ED.]

'THE fool hath said in his heart there is no God.' This passage is frequently quoted in reference to the folly of atheism; and certainly if by atheism is meant the belief that all that we see in nature is the result of chance—of a fortuitous concourse of atoms—nothing could be so absurd as atheism. Nothing can be more evident than that law and order prevail in nature—that every species of matter, organic or inorganic, is impressed with certain laws, according to which all its properties and movements are regulated. Every germ or seed produces that animal or plant which it is constituted to produce, and no other. The lioness never brings forth a lamb, nor the cow a lion; the acorn never becomes a beech, nor the beech never an oak: each produces invariably its own species. The planets, though moving in infinite space, preserve their orbits with undeviating regularity. Even comets, that were long thought to be exempt from all law and order, are now discovered to be subject to law as much as the planets, and the periodic return of many of them to the earth can be predicted with as much certainty as that of the other heavenly bodies. The weather is perhaps the most variable, and apparently lawless, thing in nature, and yet that is governed by certain laws, for though we cannot predict the weather of a certain day, it is found that taking a month, an average can be ascertained of the quantity of rain that will fall, the number of fine or wet days, and the points of the compass from which the prevailing winds will blow. This proves that even the 'chartered libertine,' as Shakspeare calls the wind, is subject to law. And when the laws on which the weather depends are better known, we may be able to predict its nature to a day. There is no such thing as chance in the operations of nature. All appear-

ance of chance arises from our ignorance. There may seem sometimes to be no regular cause, only because we cannot perceive it. To a person ignorant of the game of chess, watching those who are playing it, the moves appear to be made at random—without any reason or purpose—and yet they are all the result of rule and calculation.

As Pope says, all chance direction which thou canst not see. Paley gives the following instance:—If two persons set out at the same time from two far distant places, say London and York, and proceed on the same road, it is evident they must meet, and yet if each is ignorant of the other's purpose and movements, the meeting will have the appearance of chance, although under the circumstances it could not possibly have happened otherwise. As there is no chance or contingency in the operations of nature, so there are no exceptions to nature's laws. The laws of nature are universal and invariable, the circumstances being the same. For example, water under that degree of atmospheric pressure which exists on the level of the sea, freezes and boils at the same temperature in China, France, Peru, and England, and there is no exception to the regularity with which it exhibits these appearances, when all its other conditions are the same. This last qualification must be constantly attended to, in all departments of nature. If water is carried to the top of a mountain twenty thousand feet high, it will boil at a lower temperature than 212° (the usual temperature for boiling): but this effect takes place also according to fixed and invariable principles. The pressure of the atmosphere is much less at the top of a high mountain than at the level of the sea, and consequently the water boils at a lower temperature than 212°. The nature of water, and

the law respecting the boiling of water, are still the same, but the conditions being changed, the results undergo a modification.

The laws of nature are invariable; whenever they appear to undergo an exception, it arises from a change of circumstances under which the law operates, causing a different result from what usually occurs, *i. e.*, which occurs when the law operates under the usual circumstances, and free from any counteracting cause. Thus the law of human reproduction is that one child shall be produced at a birth, but cases often occur of two, and sometimes three and even four children being born at once; so it is the law in the case of birth, that when twins are born they shall be quite separate and distinct, and yet a well-known instance has occurred where twins were bound together by a ligament.

Now in all these cases there was no exception to the law of nature, but the usual operation was counteracted and modified by some opposing circumstance, and if we could have seen this counteracting influence, we should have known that the result could not, according to the laws of nature, possibly have been otherwise.

It is the law of water to run straighter down a smooth declivity, but if it meets with an obstacle its course will deviate from the straighter line. Thus, then, it appears that in every department of nature law and order prevail, and that the laws of nature are universal and invariable; the circumstances being the same, the results never alter. In denying, therefore, the existence of a personal intelligent Deity, we do not admit that there is any chance, contingency, or disorder in nature—we do not deny, but absolutely affirm, the constant and universal operation of law and order. This we do because it is a matter of fact, of obvious and daily experience. So far we know, but beyond this we do not know. If it be said a law must have a law-maker, we reply, we use the term 'law' only to imply a regular and established course of things—in opposition to all chance, irregularity, and disorder; we see the effect, the cause we do not see, and therefore cannot know. It may be said that 'law and order' seem to refer to mind, to intelligence; we answer, we know of no mind, no intelligence,

independent of brain, or some cerebral organisation. Wherever we see any manifestations of mind or intelligence, we always find it accompanied with a brain or nervous organisation of some kind, from which it appears to proceed, of which it seems an inherent property; therefore, as far as our experience goes, we are justified in concluding that mind and brain are inseparable, *i. e.*, that where mental powers are exhibited there must exist a brain or organisation whence these powers are derived. If, therefore, the laws of nature originate from a mind, that mind must be the property of a brain, *i. e.*, the divine intelligence must proceed from a cerebral organisation, and the Deity must be material; and if material, what becomes of the infinitude usually attributed to him? what becomes of his omnipresence? Besides, if the Deity were a material organisation he would be visible—he would become an object of sense, which it is admitted he is not. The argument is shortly this. If there is a divine mind whence all creation and its laws have proceeded, there must be a brain, an organisation to which this mind belongs, of which it is a property, and then the Deity, like man, must be material, and must be an object of sense. But no such thing is perceptible to our senses, nor is it pretended that he can be, or has ever been, so perceptible; therefore we are justified in asserting that we do not know any such being, for knowledge can only be acquired through the senses—what is not so acquired, except mathematical demonstration, can only be probability or possibility—not certainty, not knowledge. All we know, because all we see, is that there are certain effects, the objects and influences of nature—that everything in nature has a definite constitution, and is subject to certain laws—that all the operations of nature proceed in a regular, established course; and therefore we say they are governed by laws—using the term 'laws' to denote order and regularity, in opposition to chance and disorder. All we know are effects—the cause or causes of their effects we do not know. We speak, indeed, of certain effects being the result of gravitation, or affinity, or electricity; but we do not know the cause of gravitation, or of affinity, or of electricity. We see that a magnet attracts

iron, but we do not *why* it does so—all we can say is, that it is its nature so to do. What do you gain by saying an invisible being, whom you call God, gave this property of attracting iron to the magnet? Did you ever see this God? No. Did you ever hear him? No. How then do you know his existence? You cannot know it—it is merely a supposition or conjecture; and why make the supposition? It is said that the things that exist must have had a cause. Well then, if all that exists came from a being you call God, whence came God? What *caused* his existence? It is replied, *He is without* a cause; he is self-existent and eternal. But how can this be, if whatever exists must have had a *cause*? If something must be self-existent and eternal, why may not matter and all its properties be that something? Matter and its properties we know do exist. Of the being you call God we know nothing. His existence is conjectured, to solve a difficulty, to account for what exists. But of what use is it to conjecture, to imagine a cause of which we know nothing, and which must, in strict logic, be referred to some other cause. To account for the existence of what is termed the *first* cause, we must imagine another cause, and so on without end, without ever coming to any satisfactory conclusion. Granting the difficulty of imagining anything eternal, anything without a cause, if something must be supposed to be eternal, why not suppose matter and its properties to be eternal? This supposition is surely no more difficult than the supposition that an unknown being called God is eternal. Why not rest satisfied with what is known, with what is visible—why speculate in the unknown and invisible?

Matter and its properties we know do exist—their cause we do not know; and what does it signify that we know not whence matter originated? How would it benefit us to know this? Nothing whatever. All our concern is with the existence and agency of matter and its properties. These we may perceive, these we may investigate and become acquainted with, and make our knowledge subservient to our welfare and happiness.

So far from there being any folly in denying the existence of an invisible, per-

sonal Deity, the folly appears to me to lie in insisting upon the existence of such a being, of whom, being invisible and beyond all possibility of intercourse, we can know nothing.

If the denial of such a being as God is generally supposed to be, involved the necessity of denying the existence of law and order, then indeed what is termed atheism would be the greatest folly possible, because nothing can be more evident than the constant operation of law and order in the constitution of nature. And this is the absurdity and injustice of the believers in a supernatural God. They charge those who reject this belief with attributing all the objects and arrangements of nature to chance, whereas they do no such thing; they admit the constant operation of law and order, but they feel compelled to confess that they do not know whence they are derived; the cause is hidden, and therefore they speculate not upon the nature of an unknown cause, but concern themselves only with the effects which exist and operate around them. They perceive that all things are under the direction of certain laws, and the nature and operation of these they endeavour to discover, as knowing that in the knowledge and observance of these laws the welfare and happiness of mankind will be most effectually realised.

There can surely be no folly in confessing ignorance where nothing can be known, but there is great folly and presumption in pretending to knowledge where it is professedly unattainable.

There is, therefore, no folly in denying a God, *i. e.*, an invisible personal being; but there is a graver charge made against atheism, and that is, that by denying the superintendence and government of a Supreme Being it removes every restraint upon vice, every inducement to virtue, and opens the gate to all immorality and disorder. But this charge is entirely false, and proceeds altogether from an erroneous view of the subject. If it be admitted that there are universal and infallible laws in operation, the confession of ignorance of the origin of these laws, of the cause which instituted and sustains them, makes no difference in the practical operations of their laws. The laws of nature act constantly and infallibly; obedience to them produces pleasure, disobedience pain—they are

sanctioned by reward and punishment. This is all that can be required for the beneficial operations of a law. The operation of a law is not affected by our ignorance of the author of it. We are not the less under the government of a country because we are not acquainted with the name and character of the ruling authority. The grand, the only point, is that there be laws in operation—that they be enforced by sufficient penalties.

Bishop Butler observes, 'An author of nature being supposed, it is not so much a deduction of reason as a matter of experience, that we are thus under his government; under his government in the same sense as we are under the government of civil magistrates. Because the annexing pleasure to some actions and pain to others, and giving notice of this appointment beforehand to those whom it concerns, is the proper formal notion of government. Whether the pleasure or pain which thus follows upon our behaviour be owing to the author of nature's acting upon us every moment, in which we feel it, or to his having at once contrived and executed his own part in the plan of the world, makes no alteration as to the matter before us. For if civil magistrates could make the sanctions of their laws take place, without interposing at all, after they had passed them, without a trial and the formalities of an execution—if they were able to make their own laws execute themselves, or every offender to execute them upon himself—we should be just in the same sense under their government then as we are now; but in a much higher degree and more perfect manner. If God annexes delight to some actions and uneasiness to others with an apparent design to induce us to act so and so, then he not only dispenses happiness and misery, but also rewards and punishes actions. If, for example, the pain which we feel upon doing what tends to the destruction of our bodies—suppose upon too near approaches to fire, or upon wounding ourselves—be appointed by the author of nature to prevent our doing what thus tends to our

destruction; this is altogether as much an instance of his *punishing* our actions, and consequently of our being under his government, as declaring by a voice from heaven that if we acted so he would inflict such pain upon us, and inflicting it whether it be greater or less.' So far Bishop Butler. Now it is evident that it makes no difference as to the operation of the laws of nature whether we suppose them to proceed from an 'author of nature,' from a supernatural person or intelligence, or whether we profess to know nothing of the origin of these laws, nothing of any author or supernatural governor, but merely that such laws exist and operate upon us—*i.e.*, that certain substances are constituted to affect us in a particular manner;—fire will not the less burn us, nor a knife the less wound us, because we do not attribute the powers they possess of injuring us to a *divine* author or a supernatural creator.

It must be remembered that we use the term 'law,' not in its literal and usual sense as implying a *lawgiver* or governor, but merely to denote that the operations and influences of nature follow a regular and established course—that every substance, organised or unorganised, possesses a definite constitution with its peculiar properties, and stands in a certain relation to every other substance. Thus fire stands in such a relation to animal and vegetable substances as to injure and destroy them—a knife stands in such a relation to animals as to cut and kill them. The laws of nature are *facts* referring to the *constitution* of natural objects and influences, and their relation to each other. And it would be well always to view them in this light, as the most simple and intelligible. By referring the various agencies of nature to a supernatural lawgiver or governor, the subject becomes mixed up with considerations which have no necessary connection with it, and which tend only to introduce mystification, perplexity, and inconsistency.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## JUDGMENT OF CHRISTIANITY.

SIR,—In *Reasoner* No. 277, page 279, a correspondent says, ‘that it appeared to “him” that you judged of Christianity by modern theology.’ Now, sir, I really think this correspondent (Mr. Norrington) must have committed an error, not wilfully perhaps, but (as Christians generally do) innocently. That you may have judged Christianity by morality I admit, but I know not that you judged it by ‘modern theology.’ What is modern theology? For my part, I believe it is only by the ‘sayings, teachings, and actions’ of those who ‘profess and call themselves Christians,’ that the system they advocate can be judged.

I was thoroughly trained in the belief and doctrines of the Church of England. Charity, lovingkindness, chastity, &c., were held up to me as worthy my practice; and so they are. In my nineteenth year I learned that I was one of those unnatural things called a natural child. I had been kept in ignorance of this fact. I began to think and inquire what I had done. I found I had done nothing in it, and yet there was a persecuting system which branded me—‘visiting the sins of the father (and the mother, I suppose) upon the child.’ These are fine morals, thought I. I looked to Christianity—to laws made by Christians in a Christian country. Alas! what relief found I for my wounded feelings? None, sir, none. Did I want parental advice—I was shut out from it. Did I require a mother’s tender attention on a sick bed—it could not be granted me. Did I want to utter the endearing words of father, mother, brother, sister—still was I denied; and although this stigma on human nature, this insult to injury, might not have originated with Christ, I find that neither him nor his followers have ever done anything to remove so opprobrious and persecuting a distinction from off the many millions so disadvantageously born.

CORPUS DELICTI.

## LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS

IN EDINBURGH, SOUTH SHIELDS, STOCKTON-ON-TEES, MILES PLATTING, MANCHESTER, TODMORDEN, AND BURNLEY.

[CONTINUED.]

MY lecture, on my return to Burnley, the second time, was thus noticed in one of the papers, the name I forget:—‘On Tuesday evening, Mr. G. J. Holyoake delivered a lecture on the “Social Aspects of Christianity,” in the Temperance Hall; Mr. G. Edwards, bookseller, in the chair. The lecturer disclosed his views at some length and without reserve; and a discussion afterwards ensued, in which Mr. Charles Owen, Mr. Taylor, of Colne, and Mr. McGregor (a previous opponent of Mr. Holyoake), Mr. William Carter and Mr. James Dearden, local preachers, Mr. John Riley, and Mr. Rushworth, took part, Mr. Holyoake replying to their various objections. With the exception of a little exciting language from Mr. Rushworth, the discussion was temperately maintained, and Mr. Holyoake promised to give in his next lecture a more extended reply to some of his opponents.’

A fuller report, prepared by a gentleman present for the press, was as follows:—

Mr. George Edwards, on introducing Mr. Holyoake to the meeting, expressed his desire that good order might be observed, and explained why the Rev. Mr. Wilson was not in attendance on the occasion, as was expected. The lecturer commenced by observing that he always felt glad to address a thinking audience,

but, from the conduct of many Christians in that place, he had not formed a favourable opinion of those in Burnley. He always submitted his remarks and opinions to the criticism of his hearers, and the clergy ought to do the same in their places of worship. Religious people thought infidelity opposed to morality, but it was not so. He considered the aspects of Christianity to be chiefly immoral, and he objected to the so-called morality of the Bible, on the ground of its producing contrary effects upon different persons. Christianity had been tried for 1800 years, and its effects were not satisfactory. He did not charge all existing evil upon it—far from it; but he considered it as an important cause of the errors of mankind. Its advocates, in their day of power, had taken good care not to allow any other system to have a fair trial, so that fair comparison with its opponent system was difficult. The sins confessed to God, and that co-existed with piety, he considered one of the strongest proofs of the impotency of Christianity. The Bible was considered to be the word of God, and yet few agree about it. The inquisitors compelled Galileo to square his astronomy to the Bible system, and the Scotch once refused to eat potatoes because it was not commanded in the Bible. In this sense he considered the Bible *immoral*, for it prevented *progress*, and all opinions and measures had to be *depressed* to the level of the Bible code. He denied that free will ever existed, and denounced the belief in Providence as tending to retard energy, forecast, and industry. The doctrine of Free Will gave rise to a sad *immorality*, and produced a perfect *chaos* in all the affairs of life. Man's opinions were formed *for* him and not *by* him, and hence the injustice in supposing that God will punish eternally. Eternal punishment was held out as a terror to mankind by the clergy, who were considered by the State as a staff of police in black, and the Devil he considered to be the *cat* of theology. Character could only be changed by introducing *new ideas*, and this change of ideas was the great object of all education; hence the futility of attempting to change the characters of children by coercion and punishment. All the moral code of the Bible might be found in Oriental moralists, and, if Chambers's tract on Confucius be consulted, much that Christ taught and said will be found there. He considered the 'Sermon on the Mount' as of a decidedly immoral and impracticable tendency. He thought the *truth* lay in the reverse of many of its statements, and he for one had not been *blessed* when men persecuted him. Much that Christ said, he being a Jew, marked him as a superior man; but he did not consider his general example a *safe* one to follow. He considered him to have acted unwisely on many occasions, especially before Pilate. His whole career was one which created suspicion amongst the Jewish rulers, and when he assumed to himself regal honours he committed a crime against the Roman law, for which he suffered. 'To consider Christ as God made the matter worse, for what he did *as God* is no example for *man*; besides, knowing his divine nature, and being sure of entering Paradise, would render him capable of bearing suffering which exceed the capabilities of human nature. He considered Christ's teaching contradictory and inconclusive; and if the question 'why?' was asked at the close of its precepts, the New Testament returned no philosophical answer. He rejected that book in which all sects and parties found grounds for their differences, and considered it high time for a better system to take effect. He concluded by stating that he had now laid his case open for the criticisms of his audience, and would, in his next lecture, lay down the outlines of such a system as he considered best to be adopted in place of the present Christianity.

The chairman now stated the time allowed for discussion, to which Mr. Charles



Owen, churchwarden for St. James's Church, demurred; but the meeting ultimately agreed to adhere to the time announced.

Mr. Taylor, of Colne, then rose, and pointed out the absurdity of an atheist *assuming* the existence of God, which Mr. Holyoake had done in his lecture. He had no business to *assume* a God, if he would be consistent. He considered Christ to be a *perfect* example to us, since he was tempted in *all* things, like ourselves; nor did a belief in providence operate *immorally*, since it presupposed all *possible* exertions in ourselves, of which the case of Christ on the pinnacle of the temple was an example. Mr. T. went on to make some further remarks on the *little skill* required to make objections.

Mr. Owen then objected to Mr. Holyoake's view of eternal punishment, and could not see the *unjustness* of God punishing those who *never* asked him for forgiveness. Man never *forgives* until contrition is evinced by offenders, and why should God?

Mr. James Dearden, local preacher, objected to Mr. Holyoake's statements respecting the treatment of children, and considered them contradictory and improper.

Mr. Rushworth thought it his bounden duty to come to the meeting and oppose Mr. Holyoake. His family had advised him not to come, but he was determined not to be absent. He was astonished that the lecturer should come hither and state what Sir Isaac Newton never said, what Paine never spoke, and what Voltaire never dared to utter. If there is no God, what is the use of Mr. H.'s coming hither. If Sir Isaac Newton stood beside him, he would not flinch; he feared nobody, and cared for none. Mr. H., no doubt, considered himself a wise man, but he considered him as wise as any other jackass. (During these remarks, Mr. Rushworth gesticulated furiously, clapped his hands over the head of the lecturer, and shook his fists in his face. Great uproar ensued, during which some one called out they would hear no more. Mr. R. said he was like 'a giant refreshed with new wine' [which latter respect might be true], and he would *make* them hear. Upon some of his friends interferred, however, Mr. R. sat down.)

Mr. John Riley, in a connected and earnest address, which did him great credit, considering his youth, substantiated the truth of Christianity, by adducing the prophecies relating to Christ, and their fulfilment. He adduced thirty-seven prophecies of this description, and considered that Christ's prophecies respecting the destruction of Jerusalem as an indisputable proof of his divinity; whilst the dispersion of the Jews was a standing evidence of the truth of the Old Testament prophecies.

Mr. Rushworth again rose, declaring he would not be put down by either the chairman, the meeting, or any one else. Great confusion ensued, during which the meeting decided not to hear him; and, upon a word from Mr. William Carter, local preacher, he sat down.

After a short discussion as to whether Mr. McGregor should speak at this stage of the proceedings, Mr. Holyoake rose to reply to the objections *seriatim*. 'He did not agree with Mr. Taylor that it was an *easy* thing to *find* fault; it was much easier to *make* faults, but to find them was an art. Nor did he think the example of Christ could be followed, since he was considered to be so dissimilar to ourselves. He denied that *fallible* man could be *responsible* to God, who knew he would *fail*; and hence he inferred Mr. Owen's view was erroneous. He qualified his statement in reply to Mr. Dearden; and with respect to Mr. Riley, to whom he paid a well-deserved compliment, observed he did not see the connection between moral truth and prophecies with their fulfilment. All religions had their Bibles, their mira-

cles, their prophecies, &c., which each firmly believed to be divine. What was called prophecy merely proved that one man had more foresight into the future, from judging of the nature of things, than another. Mr. Holyoake replied to many other matters previously cited, apparently to the satisfaction of the bulk of the audience.

Mr. McGregor then rose, and said he did not think a Scotchman ever objected to eat potatoes, unless something better was to be had. He did not find that Christ refused to answer Pilate the question 'what is truth?' it was Pilate who turned away. He did not think any body of Christians believed the whole of the Bible to be inspired, nor did he (sensation). There were many things said there by *bad* men, which was not God's word; and whenever he found the Apostles contradicting God, he believed God and let them go. He did not find in the Bible that God was ever *below* us; there could, therefore, be no *depression* of man to his standard. He never found that Christ claimed to be king of the Jews, and Pilate says *he* found no fault in him. He did not find Providence making men idle and vicious, for Paul's words yet stand good—'If any man will not *work*, neither shall he *eat*.' He considered Mr. Holyoake's objections to miracles of no weight, for he did not see the connection between raising a man from the dead and making a steam-engine. Mr. McG. behaved better this night than before.

Mr. William Carter expressed himself dissatisfied with Mr. Holyoake's reply. He considered a miracle to be something done contrary to the laws of nature, which making a steam-engine could not be. He would like to ask what was *lost* by being a Christian? He considered it wrong to condemn Christianity because of the inconsistent lives of Christians.

[Mr. Holyoake had not done anything of the kind, but he made no reply, leaving, as is his custom, the last words, whatever they may be, to his opponents.]

To prevent the audience being so numerous or of so noisy a composition as before, a higher price of admission was charged, and the advantage in point of order and instruction was great. The second night, and the appearance of the Rev. Woodville Woodman, will be narrated another week.

The controversy concerning the Blackburn lectures is still proceeding in the Preston and Blackburn newspapers, which will, in a connected form, be shortly introduced to the readers of the *Reasoner*.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### TO FRIENDS ON FARMS.

MR. GEORGE VASEY, with whose name many social reformers are acquainted, has just published 'Delineations of the Ox Tribe; or, the Natural History of Bulls, Bisons, and Buffaloes, exhibiting all the known species and the more remarkable varieties of the Genus *Bos*,' illustrated with seventy-two engravings, by the author. The primary object of the work, is to give as correct and comprehensive a view of the animals composing the ox tribe, as the present state of our knowledge will admit, accompanied by authentic figures of all the known species and the more remarkable varieties.

Although this genus (comprising all those Ruminants called buffaloes, bisons, and oxen generally) is as distinct and well characterised as any other genus in the animal kingdom, yet the facts which are at present known respecting the various species which compose it, are not sufficiently numerous to enable the naturalist to divide them into sub-genera. This is abundantly proved by the unsuccessful

result of those attempts which have already been made to arrange them into minor groups. Nor can we wonder at this want of success, when we consider that even many of the species usually regarded as distinct are by no means clearly defined.

The second object, therefore, of this treatise, is (by bringing into juxtaposition all the most important facts concerning the various individual specimens which have been described, and by adding several other facts of importance which have not hitherto been noticed) to enable the naturalist to define, more correctly than has yet been done, the peculiarities of each species.

A third object is to direct the attention of travellers more particularly to this subject; in order that, by their exertions, our information upon this class of animals may be rendered more complete.

A new and important feature in the present monograph, is the introduction of a table of the number of vertebrae, carefully constructed from an examination of the actual skeletons, by which will be seen at a glance the principal osteological differences of species which have hitherto been confounded with each other.

In the present work no description has been given without investigation; no statement made which cannot be substantiated; no fact advanced which cannot be verified; the engraved figures are correct delineations of form and texture, ideal beauty and artistic effect being considered subordinate to truth; even the minutest details have been scrutinised by comparison with the living animal, or the best specimens in the museums.' We notice this work, of which our agricultural friends will be glad to hear.

G. J. H.

## GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Oct. 26th [7], Henry Knight, 'God—what is it?'  
 October 28th [8], Discussion in the Coffee Room.  
 Question, 'What are the best means of improving the condition of the working classes?'

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Oct. 26th, [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

Hall of Science, City Road.—Oct. 26th [7], Thomas Cooper, 'Roman History.'

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [8], Discussion.  
 Oct. 26th [7], Thornton Hunt, 'Where is the People and its Freedom?'

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

## ADVERTISEMENTS.

## JOSEPH BARKER'S WORKS.

Just published, No. 1, price One Penny, to be continued weekly, until complete,

## 'LECTURES ON THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRAYER-BOOK.'

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ESSAYS ON THE HUMAN CHARACTER, by Robert Owen. Price 1s., post-free 1s. 4d. Six Lectures on Charity, by Robert Owen. Price 6d., if by post 8d.

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CLIO RICKMAN'S LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE, with a portrait (a very scarce book). 6s. The Christian Mythology Unveiled, in a series of Lectures, by Logan Mitchell, Esq. In 19 numbers at 3d., or handsomely bound & gilt lettered 6s.

"The Christian Mythology Unveiled" is admirably written, and in every respect it is valuable. It evinces learning, acuteness, strong reasoning powers, with excellent feelings, and, in all its parts, it shows the author to have been a man of taste, with an elegant and highly-cultivated mind. We should be very glad to see it circulated in cheap numbers. for the enlightenment of the middle classes and the much-abused and despised lower orders.'—*Weekly Dispatch*.

## Our Open Page.

MR. J. P. ADAMS writes:—‘The readers of the *Reasoner* are aware, from the notices which appeared, that propagandist efforts have been made during the past summer by open air addresses, especially in the vicinity of Victoria Park. The committee conducting these meetings have reason to believe that they have been the means of adding considerably to the number of those favourable to the views advocated in the *Reasoner*, and, pleased with their success, they propose, as an appropriate finale to their labours, a Social Tea Party and Entertainment, for which purpose they have engaged the Hall of Science, City Road, for Monday evening, November 17th; and as most of their new friends will join them on this occasion, they, with the permission of the editor, earnestly invite the presence of those old and tried friends, whose contributions to the *Reasoner* have rendered such valuable aid in the work of reformation. The committee will use every exertion to make the gathering worthy of the occasion, and have already received promises of attendance from many well-known for their advocacy of kindred opinions. Mr. Thornton Hunt has consented to preside, and the musical department is confided to Mr. John Lowry, who will enliven the proceedings with his original and progressive songs. Tickets can be had of Mr. J. Watson, 3, Queen’s Head Passage, and Mr. E. Truelove, Literary Institution, John Street. Those friends who may be desirous of addressing the assembly will please to communicate with John P. Adams, Hon. Secretary, 1, King Street, Stepney.’

The *Christian Socialist*, of Saturday last, in a generous welcome of Kossuth, observes:—‘Kossuth is that which is rarest of all things now-a-days, a believer; a believer not in a mere “superintending Providence,” not in a mere benevolent Deity, but in a living, personal, national God. In almost all of his appeals, you will find him asking victory, not from skill or force, but from the “God of the Magyars.” The reader will please to lay particular emphasis upon the word ‘*Magyars*,’ for without them, as Kossuth knows very well, his cause would have come badly off.

Lady Mary Wortly Montague remarks in her Letters, Vol. I., Letter 12:—‘I could not help laughing at the Nuns of St. Lawrence showing me a wooden head of our Saviour, which they assured me spoke during the siege of Vienna; and, as a proof of it, bid me remark his mouth which had been open ever since.’

The *English Republic* for October was published as usual, and is, as usual, an excellent number, containing matter also which we hope to find occasion to controvert.

Mr. Meredith’s book has been sent. No letter has arrived from Mr. Lord, of Todmorden.

We have received No. 35 of the *Zoist* for October. It contains a steel plate of St. Ewald.

The new number of the *Westminster and Foreign Quarterly* contains several articles of great interest to the readers of the *Reasoner*, especially a reply to Rogers’s ‘Reason and Faith.’

Mr. Holyoake left London again for Lincoln on Saturday, to proceed to York on Sunday, and to Middlesbro’ on Monday, expecting to reach Accrington on Friday, Preston on Sunday, returning to London on Monday, to fulfil an engagement to lecture on Education in the Town Hall, Brighton, on Tuesday, the 28th.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## LECTURES IN STOCKPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE FROM COLNE.

STOCKPORT, thanks to its spirited shareholders, who have to contend against unexpected opposition, still retains its excellent Hall. The Manchester Hall is to be a library, the Oldham Hall is a Casino, but sold to the teetotallers—but Stockport still enjoys the advantage of the Lyceum (its new name), which is also used by the magistrates as a county court. I delivered three lectures in it. One on 'Popular Education—or what every Man ought to know,' two on speculative topics. Mr. Williams and other Chartist speakers took part in debate, the opposition part of which was at times pertinent and animated. A Catholic, who continued seated, also made a speech, but he did not seem to care much for his church, as he did not rise to defend it. Stockport delights in one Mr. Fogg, a universal genius, who writes epitaphs, epics, sells porter, coal, and poetry, and makes bad speeches. Fogg would be a fortune to a dull people, but is thrown away on Stockport, which does not appreciate him. After various interjections he persisted in speaking, when Mr. Cranks desired to be heard on a point of order; and when Fogg had done, I said, 'As that gentleman refused to attend to the chairman, he can have no claim that anybody else should attend to him. He who disowns the authority of the president of the meeting, justifies the meeting in not paying deference to him—he disqualifies himself in the most public manner from being heard. And I, therefore, call upon another gentleman to address us.' Fogg was disquieted and silent.

Colne is disturbed in its peace. Mr. Earnshaw suffereth in mind touching the fortunes of Mr. McGregor, and has addressed a letter to the editor of the *Preston Guardian*, saying:—'Sir,—I am quite sure your impartiality, as a public journalist, will give a place in your next publication to a few observations I beg to offer on a paragraph in the *Preston Guardian* of the 20th instant, among the local news, headed Burnley, referring to Mr. G. J. Holyoake's lecture. In the latter part of the paragraph before alluded to, it is stated that when Mr. McGregor presented himself at the lecture at Burnley to reply, Mr. Holyoake rose and said, "that whatever the gentleman might say he could not reply to him, for on two previous evenings at Colne the same speaker occupied the meeting with a great number of irrelevant remarks."

'I was present at the second and third lectures given by Mr. Holyoake at Colne, and gave myself the trouble to take copious notes of what he said, and the following abstract from these notes will show that Mr. McGregor's objections and questions were strictly to the point at issue:—On the first night Mr. Holyoake was forced to admit that he did not understand the language of Christians in many things; for instance, when they spoke of a God, and that God was a spirit. He said he did not know whether the opinion held by Christians was right or wrong.

(I was not present the first lecture, but this matter was discussed again after the third lecture.) On the second night, Mr. Holyoake having stated that the Church of Rome was the most scriptural, consistent, open, honest, and straightforward, and the oldest of any Christian denomination in Europe, Mr. McGregor showed, from the bulls of two or three different popes, and other authorities, that Popery was neither scriptural, consistent, nor straightforward. Whilst Mr. McGregor was showing it was not the oldest, Mr. Holyoake denied having said so, and when it was proved that he *had* said so, he retracted the assertion. On the third night, after Mr. Holyoake concluded, Mr. McGregor reviewed the three lectures, proving that a great many of Mr. Holyoake's assertions were untrue, and that though Mr. Holyoake professed to rely *only* upon facts and experience, and to believe nothing without evidence, yet, when the truth of his statements was denied, and proof demanded, he never even attempted to prove them; and whilst Mr. Holyoake and his committee professed great regard for candour and charity, Mr. McGregor showed how in several instances they had disregarded charity, candour, and even truth. A little before the meeting broke up, Mr. Holyoake spoke of his persecutions and sufferings, and stated to the meeting that one of his children died from inanition and starvation whilst he was in gaol. Mr. McGregor showed that this statement was untrue, since, according to the account given in the book published by Mr. Holyoake, it would appear that the mother and child removed to a family where several were ill of a contagious fever, which soon seized the child, and of which she died. Much surprise was caused by Mr. Holyoake offering no explanation of this, and the chairman's somewhat abruptly declaring the meeting to be at an end.

Under these circumstances, I am much astonished at the boldness with which the statements I have before referred to were made at the meeting in Burnley.

Colne, 24th Sept., 1851.

J. EARNSHAW.

As soon as I had time I sent the following reply

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'PRESTON GUARDIAN.'

Sir,—There is an Italian proverb which says, 'every medal has its reverse,' meaning—to every question there are two sides. Your correspondent in Colne can never have thought of this, or he would not have penned his letter touching my lectures in the Piece-Hall of that town.

No doubt I used the word 'irrelevant' in speaking at Burnley, but the chief reason I assigned for not replying to the person referred to was, that 'he seemed to me to be irresponsible for his words.' If I refused to debate with a person because of his irrelevancy merely, discussion would be impossible in Colne, of which Mr. Earnshaw was both witness and instance.

A person, after my first lecture, inquired of me if I had not said 'I could not understand the language of Christians.' I answered 'I had,' meaning there was *some* of the language of Christians that I could not understand. The speaker then said, 'If I could not understand their language, I could not tell whether they were right or wrong.' I replied, 'Truly I could not *in the respects in which* I could not understand them.' In what way this amounts to saying that 'I could not tell whether the opinion of Christians [implying their whole doctrine] was right or wrong,' I leave your readers to judge. But Mr. Earnshaw tells us he was not present on the night when this took place, and yet he writes upon what he cannot be a competent reporter. Is it 'relevant' in Colne for people to write public letters of criticism upon what takes place in their absence?

The Roman Church I described 'as being, *I thought*, the oldest European church.' In reply to which it was said that other churches *preceded* it, overlooking that I said 'it was, *I thought*, the oldest (in the sense of *existent*) of the European churches.' My lecture being not upon *ancient* churches, but upon the 'Churches around us' now. It was said that I did not use the words '*I think* it is the oldest.' I answered I certainly did. Two or three persons said 'no' (this is what your 'relevant' correspondent calls a *proof*). I added, as that was my *meaning*, I would (if I had omitted them) supply those words. This is what Mr. Earnshaw describes as 'retracting' an assertion. Then I observed that the point in dispute was not the *age*, but the leading features of doctrine of the Roman Church as repeated in the churches of the day. But no discussion could I obtain on the real points at issue, so 'relevant' were Colne disputants.

Let any one refer to the report in the *Blackburn Standard* of the conduct at Burnley of the person whose mouthpiece Mr. Earnshaw makes himself, and say whether that is a man whom I ought to be called upon to reply to repeatedly. During two nights I answered him notwithstanding his rudeness, vulgarity, and misrepresentations. On the third night, and not till then, I said he was certainly one of those persons not responsible for the use of words, so incoherent was his employment of them. To continue to answer such a person, was to subject myself to the lowest order of opponency. I therefore declined to reply to him further, that an opportunity might be afforded for some gentleman to speak, by whom serious and educated Christians would consent to be judged. This was why I did not reply to Mr. McGregor again—nor did I notice him at Burnley, although he reappeared there three nights.

What Mr. Earnshaw reports of observations made by this individual as not replied to, I still leave unnoticed for the reason alleged. Mr. Earnshaw says, 'much surprise was caused' by my not answering. Can this be true? After I had said that I should not reply to Mr. McGregor any more, the audience would have been, or ought to have been 'surprised' if I had. Is this another of Mr. Earnshaw's relevances to expect me to reply after I had declared I should not?

But Mr. Earnshaw omits one thing which he should have mentioned—namely, that I said several times that if any gentleman present choosed to take up any objection made, and put it to me on his own personal responsibility, I would answer it. Mr. Earnshaw understood this very well, for he rose and asked if I would answer him one question which I had refused to answer to Mr. McGregor?—and I answered Mr. E., and I would have done the same by any other Christian present. So that if my explanations were not full it was not my fault. It would have afforded me pleasure to have said that any who would read the passage from the 'History of the Last Trial for Atheism' referred to, would see how erroneous was the statement Mr. Earnshaw reproduced.

Out of respect to the readers of the *Guardian* I make this reply, which otherwise I should not feel called upon to notice at all.

G. J. H.

Whether my reply has appeared in the *Guardian* I do not know; but as the editor has great fairness I suppose it has, unless he deems Mr. Earnshaw unlikely to interest his readers any further.

Being called to London so suddenly in consequence of Mrs. Martin's death, I had to break engagements in Preston and Accrington. I wrote to both towns, undertaking to pay for the hire of the Halls, the placards, and all expenses incurred

on my account. There was not time to get out placards announcing my absence, and the audience in Preston were informed at the doors. In Accrington, bills were put out announcing the postponement.

Being asked when at Colne by some persons, who professed to be in communication with Mr. John Brindley, of Tarvin Hall, whether I would meet that gentleman, I answered that I would, provided he consented to debate some useful propositions. Asked to draw up mine, I prepared the following, but I have not heard further on the matter, nor did I expect I should:—

Mr. Holyoake will maintain the affirmative of both these propositions against Dr. John Brindley, of Tarvin Hall.

I. That the eternal punishment of men for the intelligent disbelief of Christianity (the doctrine both of the Scriptures and the orthodox Sects) is immoral.

II. That we have not sufficient evidence to believe in the existence of a Supreme Being independent of Nature.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### JOHN OF TUAM PREACHING IN LONDON.

DR. M'HALE, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam, has been preaching at the Roman Catholic chapel in Rosomon Street, Clerkenwell. The Rev. the Archbishop preached from the altar, taking his text from St. Luke, the 11th chapter. The sermon had chiefly reference to the Virgin Mary. He said the form of prayer called 'the rosary,' owes its origin to the celebrated St. Dominick, who when Europe was over-run with infidelity and vice, was raised up by the Almighty. The sectaries, or heretics of that time, inveighed with peculiar bitterness against the blessed Virgin. However peculiar in other respects, there has been one feature common to all, distinguishing well the parent from which they sprung, and that error has existed from the time of Nestorius, who first raised his impious voice against the blessed Virgin, refusing to call her the 'Mother of God.' Nestorius retired, and the Almighty avenged his infidelity by occasioning his tongue to be eaten out with worms (great sensation, and counting of beads amongst the congregation). St. Dominick knowing well what reverence was due to her who was pronounced by the angel sent by God himself as blessed, instituted a form of prayer, consisting of 15 decades, representing the 15 mysteries of the Christian religion, 5 joyous ones, 5 sorrowful ones, and 5 triumphant ones.

When the enemies of the Cross sought to upset Christianity in Europe, and to destroy every remnant of civilisation which, it is admitted, was the offspring of the Catholic church, and for this purpose had combined their scattered forces into one formidable fleet in the Mediterranean, then the princes and the Pope and the chief men of Europe found it necessary to combined their forces also. They met in the Mediterranean, and the famous battle of Lepanto ensued. Upon that occasion the formidable fleet of the enemy was dispersed, and the arms of the Christians were crowned with success. That battle attests for ever the efficacy of that form of prayer which this day is recommended to your adoption and devotion. In conclusion, I beg of you all to recommend yourselves in a peculiar manner to the blessed Virgin. And as it is at the hour of death that the blessed Virgin peculiarly shows her aid, then we may apply the words of St. Bernard, 'If you are tossed on the waves of despair, invoke Mary; if you are elated with the spirit of pride, invoke Mary; if you are threatened with the gulf of sensuality, invoke Mary.' 'Mary,' he says, 'signifies the star of the sea,' and as we are sailing on the tempestuous ocean, and our friends are looking at the haven at which they have arrived, anxious for our arrival at the port, we ought to look to that star which has been the guide of those who have outridden the storm.



## Examination of the Press.

RELIGIOUS SCRUPLES RESULTING IN MURDER.—A most extraordinary crime was committed in the Théâtre des Célestins, at Lyons, on Monday night week, during the performance. Just after the curtain rose for the second act of *Adrienne Lecouvreur* a slight cry was heard in the principal gallery, and it was followed by extraordinary agitation. The cry was uttered by a young woman who had been stabbed in the breast with a large poignard knife by a man seated behind her. Her blood spurted on the persons nearest to her, and she was immediately conveyed to a saloon, where a medical man paid her every attention, but all his efforts were unavailing, and in a few minutes she expired. The assassin, who made no attempt to escape, was secured. He is a young man named Jobard, aged 20, clerk to M. Thiebaud, a tradesman of Dijon. Having embezzled some money belonging to his master, he feared detection, and resolved to get rid of life. But having received a very religious education, he could not reconcile himself to the idea of suicide, because, as he says, he would have had no time, after striking the fatal blow, to demand pardon of God. Accordingly he determined to commit a crime which should cause him to be sent to the scaffold; the period which would elapse between the perpetration of it and his execution being sufficient, he said, to enable him to make his peace with the Almighty. He hesitated some time as to who should be his victim. First, he says, he thought of killing the President of the Republic, on his visit to Dijon; but the reflection that that would bring disgrace on his mother, who lived in the town, prevented him. Then he entertained the idea of murdering a priest as he was returning from celebrating mass, and had said to himself that such a crime would not compromise the victim's salvation, as he would probably then be in a state of grace; but this idea he also abandoned. At last he resolved to kill a woman, but without fixing on any one in particular. He thereupon determined to go to Paris, but instead of taking the railway train for that city he took the steamer to Lyons. Immediately after his arrival he bought a large poignard knife, and then proceeded to a house of ill-fame with the intention of killing some girl; but his courage failed him. He then proceeded to the theatre. He quietly witnessed the first act of the piece; and on the commencement of the second drew forth his knife. He carelessly picked his nails with it for a moment or two, and then suddenly plunged it with all his force into the left part of the breast of the victim. Her husband, who was seated by her side, not seeing the blood, cried, 'What have I done that you strike my wife?' 'Nothing,' said the murderer, with great *sang froid*. 'Nothing; I don't even know you.' The unfortunate woman had strength to pluck the knife from the wound, and she was then removed. She was the wife of M. Ricard, professor of mathematics in the Lycée of Limoges, and daughter of the proviseur of the same college. She had been married six months, and was *enceinte*. She and her husband had only arrived the previous evening at Lyons from Limoges, on their way to visit some relatives at Avignon.—*News of the World*.

UNITARIAN QUACKERISM.—If the Abrahams, Jacobs, Gideons, Davids, and Solomons of mankind wish to have many wives and concubines, it is their God who gives them to them or allows it.....If the Jews wish to slaughter all the men, women, and children of Canaan, and 'leave not a soul alive,' it is their God who leads them through seas and rivers, on dry land, who feeds and clothes them forty years in a desert, suspends the laws of the universe, and tramples on justice and every sympathy and feeling of human brotherhood, to enable them to do the bloody

work. Do you father the penal code, the aggressive extirminating wars recorded in Jewish history upon your God? Such a being is to me a devil, and I can no more honour and respect him than I can Vishnu, Moloch, Jupiter, Mars, or Bacchus. Away with such a being from the earth. Will you say that a wise and good God, in giving to man a law of life, appeared to Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Paul, Luke, and a few others, whom he selected for the purpose, and inspired them to write out his last will and testament, in a language which not one in a million of the human family ever did, or ever could, hear and understand; and then retired from further intercourse with men, and left them to find out what was in that record, as best they might? *That* an infallible rule of faith and practice! I believe God *has* given to man an infallible rule of faith and practice. This revelation was not given in dreams, visions, and direct oral communications, &c. This volume was not written on paper or parchment, nor did any human agency have any hand in writing or preserving the laws therein recorded. But it is written on the physical, mental, social, and moral constitution of every man; not in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, or English, but in a language well known and common to every human being.—H. C. Wright, in the *American Liberator*.

MISSIONARY *versus* GOD.—At a recent meeting of the London Missionary Society at Bristol, the Rev. W. Harbutt stated the following as a *fact* in his own experience in the Samoan group of the isles of the Pacific:—‘The progress made was truly gratifying. All had left idolatry and professed Christianity. Two thousand members were in their churches, and two hundred teachers were now labouring in the work. Their observance of the Lord’s day was most entire; he never saw at the present day a single canoe put into the water on the sabbath. He didn’t say they all loved the sabbath, but those who did not love it showed a kindly regard for the feelings of those who did. As an illustration he would state a fact. On one day in the year, and at a certain hour on that day, a particular tide flows into the island, bringing with it large shoals of a fish called by the natives pololo, into every opening in the island. It is always eight days after the full moon in the month of November. It happened, as it must occasionally, that this tide fell on Sunday. They were very fond of these fish, and they came to him to ask what they were to do, as the tide came on the Lord’s day, and if they did not get the fish on that day they would be unable to do so again for 364 days? He told them to use their own minds; but they pressed him to give his opinion. He asked them if they could do without them? They said “Yes, but we like them.” He replied, “I know you like them, but if you can do without them there is no necessity that you should have them, and it is works of necessity and of mercy alone we are taught to do on the sabbath.” With that they left him. In the morning, for the tide flowed in at day-break, he looked out on the shore which he could see from his house for a great distance, but not one was to be seen gathering fish. That was not all, the people of the neighbouring villages, hearing that they had taken no fish for themselves, sent some to them, so, say you, they kept their sabbath and had their fish too. No, but they told them that as they had broken the sabbath in gathering them they could not accept them.’—[God sent the fish on a Sunday, refusing to send them on Saturday, or postpone their visit to Monday; but his servant, the missionary, said it would be sinful to gather them on Sunday though God did choose to send them on that day. Did God sin in sending them on Sunday?]

THE LORD’S PRAYER.—M. Sadhir, the Viennese humourist, demanded, on his trial, whether it was treasonable to repeat the Lord’s Prayer, for the words ‘deliver us from evil’ might be construed into a prayer to get rid of the Government!

## The Government of the Laws of Nature.

## II.

BY F. B. BARTON, B.A.

It is therefore, I think, much to be regretted that Combe in his excellent work on the 'Constitution of Man,' in which he so ably develops the laws of nature, continually refers to the 'Author of Nature,' 'the Creator,' 'the Divine Being,' evidently as a person or being *distinct* from nature, as the originator and director of these laws; and thus he hampers and perplexes himself with a continual attempt to make the laws of nature harmonise with the infinite moral attributes usually ascribed to the Creator—very seldom, if ever, I believe, to the satisfaction of his readers.

It seems to me utterly vain to attempt to reconcile the present system of nature with the infinite benevolence, wisdom, and power usually ascribed to the Creator. The existence of evil evinces that the supposed author of nature is either deficient in wisdom, benevolence, or power; either he willed the existence of evil, and then he is not infinitely benevolent, or he did not will the existence of evil, and then its existence shows a deficiency of wisdom and power. An imperfect system could not proceed from a perfect being. The much-agitated question of the 'origin of evil' has in fact been created by the supposition of a perfect being as the author of nature. First a perfect being is supposed, and then it is attempted to reconcile the obviously-imperfect system of nature with the perfections of this assumed being. A perfectly vain and fruitless task! But if the system of nature be viewed by itself, without any reference to a divine author, or an all-perfect creator—merely as an isolated system of facts—no comparison could be made, no reconciliation would be necessary, and the system of nature would be regarded as the necessary result of some unknown cause—a combination of good and evil, and no more to be censured or wondered at for being what it is, than any single substance or fact in nature excites censure or surprise on account of its peculiar constitution.

The assumption of a supernatural being as the author and director of the laws of nature, appears to me to be

attended with several mischievous results; first, you make every infringement of the laws of nature an offence against the supposed divine legislator, which, to a pious and conscientious mind, must give rise to distressing remorse and the necessity of expressing sorrow and penitence; so that, in addition to the bodily suffering or the moral distress resulting from the violation of a physical or moral law, there is the mental disquietude from the fear of having incurred the displeasure of the divine law-giver; so that two punishments, observe, are incurred instead of one. Indeed Combe refers expressly to two punishments for every act of disobedience to the divine laws. For he considers that the penalties of a future state of retribution may act as motives to promote obedience to the natural laws, as if the penalties resulting from the laws themselves ought not alone to be sufficient. He says, 'Before religion—*i. e.*, a supernatural religion—can yield its full practical fruits in this world, it must be wedded to a philosophy founded on the laws of nature; it must borrow light and strength from them, and in return communicate its powerful sanctions towards enforcing obedience to their dictates (p. 11)—*i. e.*, obedience to the laws of nature in this world may be enforced by the penalties threatened by supernaturalism in a future state; so that under this view, a man who has injured his health and shortened his life by intemperance is not thereby to be considered sufficiently punished, but he is further to expect eternal torments in a future state of retribution. A view certainly calculated to make the divine legislator appear in a very cruel and vindictive light.

If the penalties incurred from the violation of the laws of nature are to be considered as punishments inflicted by a supernatural being to ensure obedience to these laws, they alone ought to be sufficient for this purpose; if they are not sufficient, but if it is necessary to threaten also severer punishments in a future state, then the laws of nature are useless, as inoperative, and ought to be repealed, and the divine government

carried on only by means of the penalties of a future state. It is most absurd to institute two sets of punishments—a less and a greater—for the same offence. This view surely makes the divine government a very inconsistent and bungling affair. It appears to me impossible to make the view of the natural laws, physical or moral, which regards them as coming from a supernatural legislator, consistent with the belief of a future state of retribution.

Again: under this view the penalties incurred will often be very unjust, oppressive, and cruel, as where persons are placed in circumstances that compel them to violate the laws of nature—as when they are obliged to pursue some unwholesome employment which injures their health and shortens their lives, or where the penalty is incurred by an accident,—as where a person breaks a leg or an arm, or is killed by a fall; or where a person is materially or fatally injured in endeavouring to save another person from injury or death. In such cases as these, to represent the unavoidable pain or death incurred, or undergone for an act of benevolence, as a punishment inflicted for a transgression of the laws of God, the divine legislator is to violate all our notions of justice and right, to say nothing of goodness or mercy, and to represent the divine being as grossly unjust and cruelly vindictive.

Combe represents the laws of nature—considered as ordained by a supernatural legislator, who is supposed to be distinguished by every moral attribute in an infinite degree—as far inferior in wisdom, justice, and mercy, to the laws of human institution. Human laws consider the motives of actions. If a man is compelled to kill a fellow-creature—*i.e.*, if he does so in self-defence—or if the injury of death he occasions is the result of accident, he is not punished. But the laws of nature make no exceptions; they enter into no moral considerations. If a man violates the laws of nature from necessity, or ignorance, or mistake, it makes no difference—he still suffers the penalty; nay, if he does so in endeavouring to perform the most meritorious moral action—as to save the life of a fellow-creature—he is nevertheless punished—*i.e.*, if the suffering or death thus incurred comes from a divine lawgiver. Combe admits the independence

of the laws of nature—*i.e.*, that he who violates the natural or organic laws will be punished, however much he may observe the moral law, and that the most virtuous man may perish if he goes to sea in a crazy vessel with an ignorant captain. But surely this view of the natural laws shows they do not proceed from an intelligent moral governor, with whom one would naturally suppose moral considerations would be paramount.

Again: if all suffering, however unavoidably incurred, is to be regarded as a punishment from the divine legislator, to attempt to alleviate or remove the suffering thus incurred would be to fly in the face of the divine authority, by endeavouring to set aside the punishment it had inflicted; just as it would be an opposition to the authority of human laws to rescue a prisoner from custody or deliver a culprit from punishment.

Under the view of the government of the laws of nature which refers them to the institution and direction of a supernatural being, the sincerest religion, the strictest obedience to the will of God, would be shown by leaving those who suffered from their violation of the laws of Nature—whether intentional or accidental—to their pain and misery as a just penalty, which it would be impiety, a resistance of the divine will, to attempt to remove or alleviate. A view certainly not calculated to promote compassion and humanity for the suffering and distressed. To regard the laws of nature as instituted and sustained by a supernatural intelligent governor involves the subject in inextricable confusion and difficulty. The two views cannot be made to harmonise. The laws of nature, under this view, are inferior to the laws of man. They are full of injustice and cruelty. The only way to avoid the difficulties and inconsistencies arising from referring the laws of nature to a supernatural governor is to view them as they really are—*i.e.*, as certain facts operating according to an established course. The existence of the facts we know, their origin we know not, Nor does it matter. We find that we are placed in a certain relationship to the various substances and influences of nature;—it is our interest, as we desire to avoid pain and realise pleasure, to

take care that this relationship is beneficial, and not injurious to us,—*i. e.*, we must observe the laws which govern this relationship. There is a manifest relationship between our lungs and the atmosphere we breathe; if the atmosphere is pure, we breathe freely and pleasantly—if impure, our lungs are injuriously affected, and our respiration becomes difficult and painful. It matters not whence the laws of nature originate, it is sufficient that we know and observe them. In the penalties which their violation gives rise to, there is sufficient motive to promote their observance; or if not, it does not appear likely that the belief that those laws and their penalties are enjoined by a supernatural governor, under the sanctions of additional and severer penalties in a future state after death, will be more operative in enforcing obedience. Man is constituted to be more affected by what acts upon his senses and bodily sensations immediately, than by what acts through the imagination, which points to a distant and uncertain period of operation. Present, material rewards and punishments are likely to be more impressive and actuating than those which are remote and spiritual.

If a man is not induced to quit intemperate habits by the penalties he suffers in his health, the prospect of premature death, the loss of character and respectability, and the means of subsistence, it is not, I think, likely that he will be induced to reform by the threat of punishment in a future state after death, which punishment, be it observed, according to the preachers' doctrine, may be avoided by repentance on the bed of death, to which period he will most probably defer the relinquishment of his vice and promises of amendment—*i. e.*, when he can no longer practise the vicious habit—which postponement is observed to be a very common case. The single and notorious fact that the most profligate or criminal life will not preclude the attainment of the everlasting happiness of heaven, provided repentance and faith in the atonement of Christ are felt at the period of death—even though that death be inflicted by the laws of the country—is to me a sufficient refutation of the assertion of the moral influence of a belief in a future state of retribution. When we speak of the laws of nature,

be it remembered, we mean only certain facts which operate in a regular and established manner; and when we speak of the penalties which are incurred by a violation of these laws, we mean the pain or injury that is suffered when we neglect the relationship which exists between ourselves and the substances and influences of nature—as when we attempt to walk on ice not sufficiently thick to bear our weight, or approach too near fire and become scorched or burnt. We refer not to any moral governor, or supernatural legislator, as the author of these laws and the inflictor of their penalties. We know of no such being, we only know the laws and their penalties. But, though we do not admit the existence of a supernatural governor or legislator—for we have no evidence of the existence of such a being—we fully and readily acknowledge, what no one in his senses can deny, that laws exist and operate, and that therefore we live under law and government—just as much so, as if we acknowledged a supernatural governor and legislator; but we admit only present, sensible, or material and certain rewards and punishments, and not those that are invisible, spiritual, remote, and uncertain; and therefore we consider we admit the most important and most effectual sanctions and motives of the two. That man is under the government of physical laws cannot admit of a doubt.

His physical constitution is placed in a certain relationship to physical substances and influences—this relationship is pleasurable or painful accordingly as these substances and influences promote man's health and safety, or his injury and destruction. Pain or uneasiness is the warning that the physical laws are being violated; pleasure and enjoyment the reward of their fulfilment, and the encouragement to obedience. If a man over-exercises his brain, and does not sufficiently exercise his muscles—as is too often the case with the mental and sedentary employments of our present state of society—the punishment of the violation of nature's law, which enjoins a certain portion of muscular exercise for the preservation of health, strength, and cheerfulness, is experienced in bodily weakness and weariness, and in the excessive sensibility of the nervous system—whence arises irritability and despondency, in fact a general disorder of

mind and body. Every one long kept in confinement at a sedentary occupation feels weary, mentally and bodily, and the desire for exercise and fresh air, which increases the longer it is deferred, is the voice of nature calling for these requisites of health and enjoyment. How perceptible is this among children, in whom the desire for muscular exercise is always strong, when they have been confined for several hours in a close school-room! how they rush out into the play-ground to give exercise to their cramped limbs and breathe the fresh and stimulating atmosphere of nature!

Again: intemperance in eating and drinking injures the digestive apparatus, and, in time, disorders the whole system—and confirmed ill-health and premature death are the final penalties. Whenever we do anything injurious to our physical system, nature always warns us of danger by causing uneasiness or pain; if this warning is disregarded, the pain is increased until permanent injury is the result, and then, when existence becomes a burden, death kindly relieves us of our pain and misery. Man is certainly under the constant and strict government of the physical laws; it is true, he is able to violate them, and thus incur danger and destruction; but this is true of all laws—even the precepts of religion, sanctioned though they are by a belief in the infinite punishments of a future state inflicted under the authority of an omnipotent being, it is admitted by religionists themselves, are continually and openly violated; hence what is considered the most awful sanction and the most powerful motive to obedience cannot ensure implicit submission to the laws thus sustained. It is certainly a remarkable fact, that man alone of all organised existences is able to break through those laws on the observance of which depend his welfare and happiness. Inanimate organisations all follow implicitly the laws of their nature. The brute creation, characterised as it is by various qualities or passions, obeys unerringly the laws laid

down by its instincts, and enjoys all the happiness of which its nature is capable. But man, distinguished as he is by the superior faculty of reason, is able to violate the laws of his nature, and thus become miserable and prematurely shorten his life. This tendency in man to act so much against his own interest, it is to be hoped will be lessened and ultimately eradicated by his becoming enlightened in the laws of his nature, and placed in circumstances that shall promote and not counteract, as is now the case, his obedience to these laws.

But, notwithstanding man's power and tendency to violate the laws of nature, it cannot be doubted that he is in a great measure, generally speaking, prevented from doing many things injurious to his health and destructive of his life by the penalties of these laws—he is, in many respects, under the government of nature's laws, and it is perceived that as he becomes enlightened in the nature and operation of these laws he is more careful to obey them.

More is now known of the laws of health, and they are more generally attended to at the present time than at any previous period; hence the public health improves, and the average duration of life has very much increased within the present century, as is proved by statistical returns and the large profits realised by insurance offices. But while it is admitted that man is under the government of *physical* laws, it will be asked, what provision is made by the laws of nature for man's *moral* government? for *that*, after all, is the principal thing—that man should possess an elevated moral character, and govern his sentiments and conduct by the laws of the highest virtue—and that hence the importance of religion, which furnishes the most powerful motives to the realisation of the most elevated moral principles.

I am inclined to demur to the assertion that morality is the principal thing, or that physical health and strength are of secondary and inferior importance.

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## CRITICISMS OF CORRESPONDENTS ON THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

SIR,—There are some assertions made in a recent *Reasoner*, by 'A Foreign Republican and Subscriber,' in answer to W. J. B., which seem to require an answer. I do not see that to prove people wrong in their object of worship is 'to stamp them with utter imbecility or roguery.' All philosophers, prophets, and reformers have spoken against the superstition of their country, and will it be said that they imputed to believers 'imbecility or roguery?' They were not afraid of such charges when made, as they have been made; and the result has been, that many were put to death for the offence they then gave to people. Socrates himself was an example, though he was moderate compared with Christ, who made coarse imputations upon the Jews for not listening to him and disregarding the time-honoured institutions of their country, believed in by so many. All Christians were against the superstitions of all the rest of the world, and did not scruple to charge priests and followers with imbecility, if not with roguery, for supporting their own religions. I do not approve of all the Christians did and said, but they had perfect right to give their opinion as to the objects of Pagan worship. Christian advocates are never more pleased than to have to defend the originators of Christianity and themselves against the charge of imbecility or roguery. Nevertheless, that does not prevent freethinkers from showing there is no trust to be placed in the divinity of Christ, his miracles, and the prophecies of him. But when it is explained that some Rationalists are superstitious and idolatrous in their absurd reverence for Jesus, they cry out, 'Do you accuse us of imbecility or roguery?' I have not denied to the founder of the Christian religion even the common attributes of human nature; on the contrary, asserted that he was as other men under the same circumstances. According to what we are told of him in the gospels, he was what we should call a rather vulgar agitator, who talked some good, with a much greater balance of nonsense.

The 'Foreign Republican's' objection to atheism and atheists would be more valid. It is allowed that there have been very few who have said there are no gods. Yet some philosophers have said so, and it is no argument against the truth of what they said that it proved millions wrong, and either rogues or imbecile. Millions, therefore, have been wrong over and over again in other matters besides religion; but that does not say they were all wrong to the full extent of roguery and imbecility. We think people are mistaken in their estimate of Jesus. It is a last lingering superstition. They cease to consider him divine in nature, and now they would have him divine in character. Idealising him may not do much harm, but if we are to take the letter of the gospels, or even the spirit of the whole, *à la* Norrington, we think it capable of doing harm as ever, though perhaps of another kind. As to the Roman governor-general of Judea recognising the Jewish son of a carpenter, is as likely as his own story that he refused the brilliant offers of the devil. It would be much more likely that we should have sent for Sir William Thom, or the Americans for Joseph Smith, in order to make the most of them, as that Pilate should have taken official notice of Christ.

It seems, from an extract in the *Reasoner* of the same date as 'Foreign Republican's' letter, that Mahomet did not always have a Sunday's dinner, until he won

it at the point of the sword. Jesus, however, had more good dinners than he would have got by sticking to the plane; and if he had nowhere to lay his head, it was his own fault, when he had only to ask his father for food or lodging. It shows that Jesus was not much in want when he complained in his travels of want of lodging, an occurrence which has often happened to the writer himself when travelling in Judea—may happen to any one—and is not a great hardship in a warm climate. The disciples all slept too well in the Mount of Olives by night. Jesus is not to be compared with any one of the thousands who have to lie in the streets of London all night, or under an arch. We may laugh at this exaggerated assumption of miseries that are attempted to be made evidence of his superiority, and to found upon it his divinity. But we are far from laughing at the miseries of those times. We deplore those times, these times, or any times when people were exposed to such an agitator as Jesus, and such charlatany as Christianity. Nevertheless, we cannot but feel a sense of the ridiculous in reading such stories as those in the gospels, and the escapades of Jesus, Peter, and Co. walking the waters, riding asses, and supposing themselves kings, princes, and judges of the world here and hereafter.

Next we have in 'Foreign Republican' the common error of supposing that when we overturn an idol we are bound to set up another in its place. Our warfare is against all idolatry and superstition. Dr. Arnold says reverence is idolatry and insanity, if directed towards an improper object. We cannot give 'Foreign Republican' any man to adore. There are plenty of characters much better for reverence than Jesus's. We every day meet with them. Newman, a modern religious writer, has told us that Fletcher, of Madely, made a much greater impression on him than Jesus.

Socrates we think much superior to Jesus in his life, and especially in his death. We never read of the latter without being moved, whilst the trial and crucifixion of Jesus seem an absurdity. We think the morality of Shakspeare much superior to Christ's.

Mahomedans do not want Mahomed as a divinity. The Pagans could reverence the sun, and we think any adoration of the mysteries of nature superior to the pretensions of the son of a carpenter, born of a virgin and crucified. We should be proud to demolish such a superstition, but we certainly have nothing but morality to give in return. About morality, as G. C. Lewis, M.P., says, there is no doubt in comparison with religion; the one changes, the other never changes—we may progress in the one, but we make none in the other. Religions, he says, are ever oscillating; Macanlay the same; and David Hume fears that mankind will be only drawn from one absurdity to another. However, the *Reasoner*, I believe, never had 'a business-like view of the subject,' for on account of commercial considerations they never have spared any superstition—and for that reason, probably, the *Reasoner* has no great circulation, and would be a loss if many did not subscribe to it besides taking it in. I believe its policy, nevertheless, is very good policy, and that it is very fair having a Platform upon which each may battle for his superstitions; and though I dislike Jesus humanly as well as divinely, I make common cause with those who are against the dogmas of Christianity. I believe 'F. R.' and Mr. Norrington equally with myself reject the divinity of Christ, the prophecies, miracles, &c.; and we are not troubled by the curious catalogue of dogmas, about which the church is divided—a catalogue thus enumerated by G. C. Lewis, in his book 'On the Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion:—' The doctrine of the Trinity; the relations of the three divine persons, and their



common essence or substance; the union of the divine and human natures in the Saviour, and the procession of the Holy Ghost; the eucharistic sacrament; the communion of the laity in both kinds, and the alleged substantial change and real presence in the consecrated elements; also as to the nature and operation of grace and good works, and the theory of original sin, regeneration, justification, and predestination; church authority, tradition, general councils, the power of the Pope and of national churches, episcopal government, ecclesiastical ceremonies and vestments, monastic vows, ordination, celibacy of the clergy, auricular confession, purgatory, baptism, individual inspiration, &c.'

I should have understood what Mr. Norrington meant by spirit, had I not thought he contradicted himself by referring to the writings concerning Jesus in the four gospels. As to the assertion that I knew of no revolution produced by morals, as he asserted it first, he should have proved it. I have no fear of morality independent of Jesus; I think it has flourished without Jesus, and has only been hurt by religion. Is the controversy about morality at the present day? No, it is rather about anything else in the catalogue of dogmas I have given. Almost the only good thing that Jesus ever said, was that morality and salvation were quite independent of any belief in him. To say the contrary is to contradict an eternal truth.

W. J. B., Oxon.

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#### POLEMICAL INTELLIGENCE.

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SIR,—Glasgow, the great commercial metropolis of the west, is rapidly achieving distinction for public and private debates in connection with theology and politics. Indeed, controversial discourses, and public and private discussions, from pulpit and platform, on the streets and in the workshops, seem to be at present the all-pervading mania. The question of the Divine Existence has enjoyed here little repose within the last eighteen months. Notwithstanding the city walls have been placarded so continuously with bills announcing lectures and public debates on the Being of a God, public interest at this moment remains undiminished; in truth, it seems to be rather increasing in intensity. Since Mr. Southwell's arrival amongst us, two months ago, he has held three public engagements with the enemy, and a fourth is to be entered upon shortly. Christians of varied creeds are throwing down the gauntlet to Mr. Southwell as fast as circumstances enable him to pick it up. The last public debate was between Mr. James Adams (delegate for Glasgow to the Chartist Convention of 1848), and Mr. Charles Southwell, held in the Lyceum Rooms on the evenings of Monday and Wednesday, 29th September, and October 1st. The question debated was—'Have we reason to believe in the existence of a God—perfectly good, wise, and powerful?'

Mr. Adams opened the debate the first evening, and gave the following definitions of terms he employed:—

*The term God.*—A being, a person, a subject in which perceptions centre, and from which volitions flow.

*Perfect goodness.*—A disposition to do all that perfect wisdom dictates and perfect power can accomplish.

*Perfect wisdom.*—The possession of a knowledge of all knowable things.

*Perfect power.*—The ability to accomplish all that perfect goodness, in the light of perfect wisdom, desires.

And then he added, that this perfectly good, wise, and powerful Being is a spirit,

an immaterial Being, having no properties in common with matter, but altogether a distinct substance, a substance, too, of which as much may be known as can be known of matter. Mr. Adams then went on to explain the nature of the evidence, which he said was not that of mathematical demonstration—not the evidence of testimony—not the evidence of sense—but the balancing of probabilities.

I shall here subjoin a list of reasons which he adduced as forming the substratum of his speeches.

Firstly.—The almost universal prevalence of the belief in the truth of the proposition.

Secondly.—The manifestations of benevolent and wise design in nature, as far as we are able to trace her operations.

Thirdly.—The origin and present condition of man cannot be rationally accounted for upon any other hypothesis.

Fourthly.—That to suppose the proposition true accords with all our experience, while to suppose it false belies all human experience.

Fifthly.—That no atheistical theory of the universe ever advanced could stand a philosophical investigation.

Sixthly.—That atheism intends to extinguish conscience, unbridle human lust, and destroy morality.

Seventhly.—That on a denial of the proposition have been founded the most heartless, cruel, and barbarous systems of political economy ever propounded, and the adoption of which by the politicians of this country has caused all our social evils so far as they are traceable to iniquitous legislation.

Such were the reasons which Mr. Adams, the pupil and admirer of Immanuel Swedenburgh, adduced in vindication of a God's existence. Mr. Southwell denominated them seven assertions. Mr. Southwell adduced the argument of Epicurus with great effect, which at last compelled the admission from Mr. Adams that his God was limited, his power was bounded by his goodness. Both disputants displayed throughout great ability and friendliness of spirit. The audiences were respectable and numerous, numbers having come from considerable distances, although both evenings were rather wet. A sprinkling of ladies was present, and all ended with harmony and decorum.

37, West College Street, October 7, 1851.

JAMES WILKIE.

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#### MR. HAGEN TO 'A TRUE REASONER.'

SIR,—In the *Reasoner*, No. 279, I find an article by you, entitled 'Christianity v. Infidelity,' wherein you endeavour (and apparently with great satisfaction to yourself) to prove that Christianity is established on a firm basis, and infidelity on a rotten one. To those who are guided by faith your statements may appear good, not so to those who are otherwise guided. I agree with you that there are many things true that do not require a mathematical proof; but, I would ask you, are they in opposition to reason? Christianity assumes that because our 'first parents' ate of 'the forbidden fruit,' that all mankind have, in consequence, become sinners. An old countryman (whom a certain orthodox friend of mine tried to convince that sin was occasioned by our first parents eating of that fruit) was so startled by it, that he lifted up his head and exclaimed, 'Woy, I hanna non on it.' Will reason bear you out that Christ was not the son of a mortal man? Will reason bear you out that because Christ's blood was shed on the cross, it

opened a door for sin to be banished the world? Again, will reason bear you out that because Christ (the innocent) suffered (offering himself a ransom), that God would accept that as an offering for the sins of the whole world?

These appear to me to be the foundations upon which Christianity is built. It will be of no use for you to assert that these things are true, unless you show them to be morally true. You say, 'Objections against a thing fairly proved are of no weight.' What do you mean by this? Is it that you consider Christianity fairly proved? Again, you say 'The proof rests upon our knowledge, but the objections rest upon our ignorance. It is true that moral demonstrations and religious doctrines may be attacked in a very ingenious manner, because they involve questions on which our ignorance is greater than our knowledge. But still our knowledge is knowledge, or, in other words, our certainty is certainty.' I cannot deny that 'knowledge is knowledge,' &c., but what information does that give me? Respecting 'ignorance,' I suppose you intend to convey that infidels are ignorant of the principles of Christianity, as you say in another place 'He is in the very situation of the peasant; he bolts into the very heart of a grand religious system—he has never adverted to its first principles, and then he complains that the evidence is bad, but the fault in neither case lies in the evidence, it lies in the ignorance or the obstinacy of the objects.' I perhaps know as much of Christianity as yourself, having been one for forty-five years. and an infidel fifteen (by far the happiest part); therefore have seen both sides, which is the only true way of judging; and I suspect whether you have been a Christian much more than half the time I was. Does reason, then, say you ought to be the best judge? Why may I not be an authority against it as well as you for it? Both my experience and my judgment lead me to differ from you, especially as to the juvenility of imputation which makes the staple of your letter.

Derby, Oct. 5, 1851.

BENJAMIN HAGEN.

☞ The 'Words Spoken at the Grave of Mrs. Emma Martin,' which appeared in the last number of the *Reasoner*, will be reprinted in a separate form for distribution, and will be ready by Saturday next.

#### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Nov. 2nd [7], Thomas Cooper, 'Roman History.' 4th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room.

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Nov. 2nd [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

Hall of Science, City Road.—Nov. 2nd [7], Robert Cooper, 'The Power of the People for Self-Emancipation.'

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [8], Discussion. Nov. 2nd [7], a Lecture.

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday [8], a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

#### ADVERTISEMENT.

##### POPULAR WORKS.

A Few Days in Athens, 1 vol., cloth. By	1 6
Frances Wright.....	1 0
Ditto, in a wrapper.....	3 0
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1 vol.....	0 3
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— Queen Mab, 1 vol., boards.....	1 0
— ditto ditto wrapper.....	2 6
Cooper's Infidel's Text Book, 1 vol.....	
(To be had in thirteen numbers at twopence.)	

London: James Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster-row.

### Our Open Page.

MR. OWEN having placed at the disposal of the Social Propaganda a number of copies of the address which he delivered at the City of London Tavern in August, 1817, and which excited great attention at the time—the committee, desirous to distribute these addresses to the best advantage, will forward copies to any parties applying for them, on receiving two postage stamps for each copy, to cover postage. Copies may also be had, gratis, of Mr. Watson, Queen's Head Passage, and of Mr. Truelove, at the Institution, John Street. Communications to be addressed to Mr. Henry A. Ivory, Hon. Secretary, 52, College Place, Camden Town.

Mr. Ruddock, of Leeds, writes:—'I am very happy to inform you that free-thought is on the increase in Leeds. We are adding to our numbers every week. We are taking a large room. We have a discussion on hand at present with our friend Mr. Smith and a town Missionary of the name of Barber, which is having its desired effect. It is talked of in every workshop in Leeds.' Mr. Ruddock has published a small bill, at his own cost, advertising the *Reasoner*.

'The Temperance Hall, Bradford, was erected by public subscription through the means of galas, rural fêtes, and private donations. Mr. Sturge, of Birmingham, gave £10 towards it, upon the conditions that it should be conducted on the principles of perfect religious liberty—that is, open to all parties. Other gentlemen followed in the same way, and the Hall for a time was conducted on that generous principle. We had Mrs. Martin in it for a week. She shook the pillars of Zion in such a manner that they have not been able to recover their foundation since (although they are built upon a rock). The heaving to and fro has been seen in the various controversial subjects that the ministers have taken up.' Thus writes Mr. Rider, who lately applied for the Hall for a lecture for Mr. Holyoake, and was refused. The teetotallers ought to look to it, for at present that body seems to abstain from liberality altogether.

Mr. Barker, Superintendent of the Leeds town Mission, lectured in that town on Sunday the 12th inst., against the 'Logic of Death.' We understand the good lecturer was vituperative.

In a work entitled the 'Shores and Islands of the Mediterranean,' it is remarked—'A Turk has none of that shame which keeps the religion of so many Christians so sadly in the background; he scoffs at no man's devotions, nor does he suppose it possible that anybody will scoff at his. There is a less favourable view to take of the matter, which is not altogether without truth. The Turk looks on himself as so immeasurably above the Christian that it will no more occur to him to alter his habits because they were not understood or sympathised with by others, than it would to us to change ours, because the birds of the air or beasts of the field might wonder at them. At the same time the thing itself is praiseworthy, and it would be well if something like it were more common among ourselves.'

A writer in the *Boston Transcript* makes the following reference to Mr. W. Lloyd Garrison, the sturdy abolitionist:—'We contemplate the dealings of the Almighty, not in the spirit of arraignment, but of wonder. He has taken from this world, in the midst of their days and of their usefulness, men eminent for their fervent piety; and yet the devil is still permitted, not only to walk up and down in the earth, but to edit abolition newspapers.'

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## THE REV. W. WOODMAN AT THE BURNLEY LECTURES.

BURNLEY is great in poets. The following is a recent example of the lyric and religious muse (copied, I am told) from a neighbouring church-yard. Whether written before or after death does not appear. The latter I should say, judging from the nature of the matter. The 'head' of the family thus addresses his surviving spouse:—

Weep not for me, my dearest dear,  
I am not dead, but sleeping here;  
With patience\* wait, prepare to die,  
And in a short time you'll come to I.

For my part I think their orators about on a par with their poets, judging from the extraordinary specimens I have met with in debate. But on the third night the order was unlike anything we have experienced in that cinder-strewn town. My consideration of the 'Moral Aspects of Christianity' involved objections to—the word of God; the power of belief; the eternal sentence; the morality of the East; the career of Christ; the doctrine of Providence. The kind of discussion which took place *about* this lecture (it can hardly be said to be *upon* it) has already been recorded.

On reaching the railway station on the third night of lecturing, a gentleman (a stranger) whispered to me, 'A clergyman will be imported to-night to meet you.' After the lecture, which was virtually upon the 'Moral Aspects of Atheism,' a gentleman unmuffled himself, claimed to offer objections, and was invited to the platform. He astonished me by saying at the commencement, that he was not going to discuss the *lecture*, and commenced what was evidently a premeditated disquisition upon matter and spirit. He said that we had 'met before;' but I did not betray any recognition of that circumstance, and looked up at him like one who gazed upon vacancy. When he had done I called upon the next speaker to proceed. As, however, the meeting wished me to attend to this gentleman in particular, we discussed for the space of an hour, but at no time did I call him by his name, nor did it transpire to the meeting. My repugnance to the Rev. Mr. Woodman was very great, on account of his treatment of Mrs. Martin in London, of which we gave a report at the time. Among other things, on this occasion he said he would challenge me to a discussion—1st. On the Existence of a Supreme Being. 2nd. The Immortality of the Soul. 3rd. The Divinity of the Word. The conditions being the usual Swedenborgian ones, I declined them, and the audience seemed to acquiesce in the grounds of my refusal. On the whole Mr. Woodman behaved on this night courteously. He also professed in the end to have learned more that he could respect, of the nature of our views, than he had

\* The case is hardly one in which impatience is felt.

before become acquainted with, and offered me his hand publicly, which I accepted in the spirit in which he tendered it. Respecting what he advanced in argument, Mr. Woodman must have been playing fast and loose with me—tempting me by innocent Swedenborgian platitudes to agree to discuss with him, that afterwards he might come down upon me in all his strength. I cannot think that the sample of argument to which he treated me that night is a fair specimen of the store he must have in reserve. I would try to produce fragments of his speeches, but a better opportunity I suppose will occur, for after the vaunting which runs through all their periodical writings, they will yet surely accept discussion on some equitable and honourable terms.

Returning from Middlesbro', of which I have an account to render, I called at Leeds to see our friends there—Messrs. Bowes, Ruddock, and others. The society of Rational Progressionists have secured a new Hall, and a very pleasant one, which has a small gallery, a separate entrance, and a good situation. It will hold four or five hundred people. It is being fitted up in a plain and inexpensive manner, and will soon be ready for public use.

At Accrington the audience was numerous—beyond any one's expectation in the town. The room was crowded to suffocation, and there being no ventilation possible, the speaking was both fatiguing and hurtful. The Rev. C. Williams made desultory observations but declined discussion, announcing his intention to make a formal reply to the lecture in the following week. Another reverend gentleman just spoke to say why he did not speak. The evening was chiefly occupied by laymen. As the audience was comprised of strangers uninformed as to our principles, it will be worth while revisiting Accrington to lay some consecutive expositions before them.

The letter last week given in reply to that of Mr. Earnshaw, did appear in the *Preston Guardian*. A copy of that paper has been forwarded to me by Mr. Edwards, of Burnley.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

#### ASSOCIATION FOR PROMOTING THE REPEAL OF THE TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.

SIR,—Enclosed is a copy of our financial report up to Michaelmas. It has been made up earlier than usual, as it will be necessary to commence agitating, immediately, in favour of the motion to be introduced in the House of Commons, and which may probably be brought forward at an early period of the Sessions. The report of the proceedings of the Association, and of the state of the question, will be issued, as usual, in the beginning of the new year. In the meantime I am instructed to urge on you the necessity of assisting the committee in every way which your means will allow; and beg to suggest that the following things should be done by all who are able:—

1. Subscriptions to be *promised immediately*, and paid as early as convenient.
2. Petitions to be got up, and signed, as numerous as possible, for early presentation next Session.
3. Public meetings to be held whenever that course is practicable.
4. Letters to be written to the Board of Inland Revenue whenever any irregularity is observed in the administration of the law.

All who are willing to give their personal assistance, or have any information to communicate, are requested to apply to the Secretary; if personally, on Wednesday mornings, between 10 and 2, or on Wednesday evenings, after 8 o'clock.

20, Great Coram Street, Brunswick Square.

C. D. COLLET, Sec.

## Financial Report from the 13th of February, 1851, to Michaelmas, 1851.

## RECEIPTS.

Addiscott, W. ..	£0 10 0	Lectures ..	9 8 3
Allan, T. (Edinburgh) ..	1 1 0	Lee, Dr. ..	1 0 0
Ashurst, W. ..	3 3 0	Linley, W. ..	1 1 0
B., J. ..	0 10 0	Lombe, E. ..	100 0 0
Baldwin, J. (Birmingham) ...	5 0 0	Lushington, C., M.P. ..	2 0 0
Bond, W. ..	0 10 0	Members' shilling subscriptions	3 18 0
Bonnick, J. ..	0 1 0	Mill, J. S. ..	1 0 0
Bowkett, Dr. ..	1 0 0	Mills, J. ..	0 4 0
Bunting, C. J. ..	0 5 0	Mollett, I. F. ..	0 10 0
Carloss, W. I. ..	0 4 0	Mudie, C. ..	1 0 0
Cassell, J. ..	5 0 0	Novello, J. A. ..	4 0 0
Christie, W. ..	1 1 0	Piercy, W. ..	0 1 0
Clarke, C. C. ..	1 0 0	Place, F. ..	10 0 0
Cobden, R., M.P. ..	5 0 0	Reasoner Fund:—Trevelyan, A.,	
Collection at St. Martin's Hall	1 14 9	Edinburgh, £2; Holyoake,	
Cuthbert, J. ..	0 5 0	G. J. (through), £2 ls. 6d.,	
Dixon, W. ..	0 1 6	being the last instalment of	
Edwards, P. ..	1 1 0	£25 subscribed in sixpences	4 1 6
Epps, Dr. ..	1 1 0	Saull, W. D. ..	0 10 0
Ewart, W., M.P. ..	5 0 0	Smith, J. (Bingley) ..	5 0 0
Finch, J. ..	0 2 6	Soames, J. ..	0 4 0
Gibson, T. M., M.P. ..	10 0 0	Turner, J. ..	0 2 6
Hall, A. ..	0 4 0	Walhouse, E. ..	1 0 0
Hargreaves, W. ..	5 0 0	Westerton, C. ..	0 10 0
Harrison, S. ..	1 1 0	Wilkinson, W. A. ..	5 0 0
Hickson, W. E. ..	1 1 0	Williams, W., M.P. ..	1 1 0
Jackson, A. (Derby) ..	0 7 0		
Larken, Rev. E. ..	1 1 0		208 16 0
Le Blond, R. ..	5 0 0		

## EXPENDITURE.

Advertising ..	£9 9 6	Travelling expenses of the se-	
Lectures ..	26 6 6	cretary to Manchester, Liver-	
Porterage ..	6 0 7	pool, &c... ..	5 0 0
Postage ..	20 13 6	Writing ..	1 5 0
Printing ..	32 7 0	Debts of the Newspaper Stamp	
Rent of office, £18 15s.; rent		Abolition Committee ..	46 16 10
of rooms for public and spe-		Balance in hands of treasurer ..	9 11 4
cial meetings, £13 5s. ..	32 0 0		
Stationery ..	5 19 10		208 16 0
Sundries ..	13 5 11		

Examined and found correct, October 13, 1851.

SAMUEL HARRISON, Barnsbury-park, Islington.

P. A. TAYLOR, Carey-lane.

[Above we give the financial report of the Association for Promoting the Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge. We are certainly nearer than last year to the accomplishment of that desirable object, but we have no reason to believe that Lord John intends to follow the recommendation of the Committee; he will probably do that which costs him least trouble. Every exertion that is in the people's power should be brought to bear upon the Treasury. Among our readers we can reckon some propagandists who can do something in this way. We recommend them, if in the country, to write to the secretary, offering their services; if they are in London, they had better call on a Wednesday evening, at eight o'clock. We are sure that every assistance that is offered will now be put in requisition, as the question stands in that position in which popular clamour would be able to advance it very effectively. The readers of the *Reasoner* have set an example by sending a most liberal contribution to the funds, and we trust they will follow up this beginning by personal exertions: their motto should be, 'Think nothing done while aught remains to do.'—ED.]

## 'JESUS AS A MAN.'

IN the *Investigator* of August 13, under the caption 'Jesus as a Man,' I find one correspondent willing to admit, as an historic fact, that such a man as Jesus Christ existed. That he never existed, is to me evident from the following facts:—

1. His personal existence was denied as matter of fact by the most philosophical, cool, and matter-of-fact portion of the primitive Christians, and in the argument sustained by an appeal to matter of historic fact.

2. There is not a solitary instance of the personal existence of any distinguished reformer being denied, and his would not, had he existed.

3. The passages quoted from profane historians to prove his existence, have all been demonstrated to be interpolations and forgeries, and so admitted by the ablest polemics and divines.

4. Saul of Tarsus, afterwards called Paul, (what for?) who insisted on 'a Christ crucified,' on his own testimony saw him only in mesmeric vision; and the writings ascribed to Paul were not received till 408 as canonical by the church.

5. The four Gospels are not four independent histories of Jesus Christ, but are derived from a document of unknown authorship as their origin, found floating in Egypt and connected with the worship of Manes and the Christ of India, and extant two hundred and sixty years before the common era.

6. The entire Catholic clergy rest as to authority alone upon the church, Leo X. calling the entire history of Christ a mere *fable*.

7. The rejected Gospels were the more primitive, and so contemptible for their puerilities and errors that they were rejected, while the accepted Gospels were less primitive, written long after in more modern Greek, and became canonical by a *miracle*. Some write as if the Acts of the Apostles were a veritable history—a reliable narrative of facts. He should remember that the whole affair, the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, are but the device of monks accommodating all to a fictitious person, a man of straw, the Christ of India as the Christ of Palestine.

8. The account of the resurrection is, in point of fact, in more than a dozen particulars, for ever irreconcilable.

9. The things told to make the resurrection and crucifixion wonderful, are egregious and false. A terrible angel could not be seen inside and outside of the sepulchre—by the same person not at the same time and at the same time—there was not darkness over the whole earth for the space of six hours.

10. The experimental piety realised in sentiment, dreams, trances, and prophecy, is found in all religions, and now accounted for scientifically, conclusively, and absolutely on natural principles — a part and parcel of our common humanity.—  
VINDEK, in the *Boston Investigator*.

## NOTICE.

NEXT week the *Reasoner* will contain the 'History of Two Nights in Blackburn,' with all the correspondence relative thereto, between Mr. Holyoake, the Improvement Commissioners, and the Preston papers. This notice is given for the convenience of booksellers who have asked to be informed of the time of its publication, that they might be able to order it. We have been asked to print it in a separate form for circulation in Blackburn and its neighbourhood; but as it will occupy almost an entire *Reasoner*, it may be considered as already in a separate form at one penny.



### Examination of the Press.

DEFENCE OF METAPHYSICS.—A correspondent of the *Bristol Mercury*, under the signature of 'Catholicus,' writes as follows in reference to some remarks which fell from an accomplished gentleman of that city at a recent *soirée* at the Philosophical Institution:—Dr. Symons drew a contrast between the advantages which result from the pursuit of physical and of metaphysical studies (including under the latter term all that is vaguely known sometimes as metaphysical, sometimes as moral science), and told us that one had to do with consciousness the other had not. Now this distinction, sir, I respectfully submit, is erroneous. Did consciousness not exist physical science would cease as well as mental: for colour, size, form, weight, density, everything, in short, of which physical science is conversant, is known to us only through our consciousness. No doubt that the senses by which we communicate with the outer world play a part in the one case which they do not in the other; but consciousness is necessary alike to the naturalist and the metaphysician, and the only distinction is in the object of the consciousness and the mode of its influence. The accomplished doctor then drew an elaborate simile between the votaries of metaphysical studies and men who are ever striving to scale some mountain passes, but ever striving in vain, for each newly discovered tract but ends in disappointment, mocking the foolish men and leaving them no nearer their desired end than their sires or grandsires were. But is this the case with metaphysical science? Is this often-repeated charge clearly proved? If it be true, as undoubtedly it is, that there are questions to the solution of which we are no nearer than were the Idumæan Arabs before the tents of Job, or the earliest of Grecian thinkers, does it follow, or is it really the case, that this is the predicament of the whole science? Surely, in the haste of the moment, Dr. Symons forgot that many of those truths which were received as absolutely new by the most accomplished men of Athens, as they gathered around the most marvellous of all heathen men in the market-place or the painted porch, are now familiar to every boarding-school girl, and are intimately and essentially woven into our ordinary language and our daily habits of thought; surely he forgot that many of those truths which Aristotle discourses with so much skill, and which he deemed too hard for the young man to comprehend, are now well known to all—nay, more, that difficulties which perplexed his giant intellect have since been solved, and no longer raise a doubt; surely he forgot that this progress no less marks the annals of modern than of ancient philosophy—that realism has disappeared from amongst thinkers, destined to return only when Galileo shall be proved in error as to the motion of the earth—that boundaries of logic have been advanced—that the writings of Butler have for ever established some interesting points in morals. But there is another charge yet in store. Metaphysical science, it is said, is sterile and bears no fruit to man; it may train the mind so as to render its application to other studies more easy, but this is all that it can do. But, sir, is the acquisition of truth no sufficient end, no worthy fruit of study to a being in whom is implanted a love of truth? Is no science, no knowledge worthy of cultivation of which the result is not something which we may see and touch and taste and exhibit in the Crystal Palace? Heaven forbid that we should ever set up to ourselves such a standard of value as this! But, do as we will, so long as men feel that they are moral beings they will crave more or less earnestly after ethical science, by a law of their nature which seems to me to warrant, if it be not an obligation to, the pursuit of it; so long as they feel that material things are not the only existences to which

they stand related will there be metaphysical science, more or less developed. I have no wish whatever to disparage physical science, but would only query whether it be wise to make its elevation dependent upon the dispraise of metaphysical studies. I have no wish, as I have no fear, of seeing Englishmen devoting all their time, like certain of their neighbours, to transcendental metaphysics: but, on the other hand, I should lament to see all our studies governed by a dreary utilitarianism, and checked by the oft-repeated question of *cui bono*? As in morals we should not be ever inquiring, 'Will this or that action be expedient to ourselves in its results?' so in science we should not be too inquisitive as to what will be the material blessings with which each study will repay our pursuit of it; but we should follow alike after what is good and what is true.

**EQUALITY.**—We shall scarcely meet with a single great event in the lapse of 700 years which has not turned to the advantage of equality. The crusader and the wars of the English decimated the nobles and divided their possessions; the erection of communities introduced an element of democratic liberty into the bosom of feudal monarchy; the invention of fire-arms equalised the peasant and the noble on the field of battle; printing opened the same resources to the minds of all classes; the post was organised so as to bring the same information to the door of the poor man's cottage and to the gate of the palace; and Protestantism proclaimed that all men are alike able to find the road to heaven. The discovery of America offered a thousand new paths to fortune, and placed riches and power within the reach of the adventurous and obscure. The various occurrences of national existence have everywhere turned to the advantage of democracy; all men have aided it by their exertions; those who have intentionally laboured in its cause and those who have served it unwittingly, those who have fought for it and those who have declared themselves its opponents, have all been driven along in the same track, have all laboured to one end, some ignorantly and some unwillingly—all have been blind instruments in the hands of God. It is not necessary that God himself should speak in order to disclose to us the unquestionable signs of his will; we can discern them in the habitual course of nature, and in the invariable tendency of events. I know, without a special revelation, that the planets move in the orbits traced by the Creator's fingers.—*De Tocqueville.*

**A 'DEVINE' WITNESS.**—At the Clare petty sessions a case of forcible possession was tried. Patrick Devine, of Prosperous, was examined.—Court: How old are you?—Witness: Fourteen off.—Do you know the nature of an oath?—No.—Do you know that there is any punishment in the other life for false swearing?—No, begor.—Do you know that if you live wickedly, or irreligiously, or that if you commit a moral sin and die without repenting of it, you will be damned?—Not a word at all at all.—Did you ever hear of hell?—Of hell; not at all.—Nor of Heaven?—Bad scran to the word.—Have you heard of God?—I have, a little.—And you have never heard of hell or heaven?—Oh, not a sintence.—Can you read or write?—Not a word.—Did you ever go to school?—I did.—For how long?—A fortnight.—Have you been instructed to make those answers?—I hav'nt; I may as well tell your worship at once, I don't know anything about heaven or hell—about this life or the other; the fact is I know nothing at all at all.—Where do you go to prayers?—To the chapel; where else?—Sir Maltby: I do not believe one word of what you have stated. If you have attended to what you must have heard in the chapel, you, no doubt, are sufficiently well instructed. I repeat that I do not credit a single word you have expressed.—*Weekly Paper.*

### The Shorter Catechism.

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IN his masterly address, Mr. Combe rendered great service to the cause of education; but he did more than this, he spoke in a noble and earnest manner of men who have had to labour against opprobrium and misrepresentation, and who now, by means of their own energy and power, are the representatives of the highest influences that are operating in British society.

All who are acquainted with the works of Mr. Combe, must be aware that on theological topics there is not much difference between his opinions and those of the Unitarians and Deists, of whom, in the matter we quote, he speaks so highly. Yet, his position is to us strange and unaccountable. He is influencing the people to an extent not surpassed by any other man. His books are circulated in all districts; they are read and re-read by artisans and labourers; and in most instances the readers are led by the might of his arguments to relinquish the doctrines in the belief of which they have been trained, and to forsake the traditional churches it was their ambition to support. Yet, while he is thus undermining the influence of the churches, and while, in addition, he is creating unbelief in the minds of thousands, with respect to the absurd claim of plenary inspiration, which is made on behalf of the Scriptures, he has never directly questioned or opposed that claim of plenary inspiration, or been other outwardly than a conformist to the churches. Some of the dogmas of the churches he has directly opposed; but that chief dogma, the supreme authority of old books, on which all the popular dogmas depend, and from which they draw what life they have, he has not questioned. The unbelief of Mr. Combe may be inferred from all his works, but not otherwise known. He

does not state it in plain terms; indeed, we should occasionally assume that he was a believer, from his care to reconcile some of his views with the statements of Scripture, or from his care to suggest that some other interpretation is required; we should assume him to be a believer from these causes, and also from his constant support of the orthodox systems, were we not prevented by the tenor of his works, which axe-like goes to the root of the orthodox tree, hews it down as a thing in which Mr. Combe has no faith, as a thing for which he has only loathing and a most destructive contempt. We were pleased with his remarks respecting the enlightened men who are teaching us how to think, and how to live—those remarks were indicative of less reserve and caution than Mr. Combe has been in the habit of showing; but we should rejoice if he would go still farther. Leigh Hunt has done nobly in the publication of his views. If Mr. Combe would do likewise, he would make an additional claim on the gratitude of his friends. It seems, however, to be the fashion just now, to cover over real hostility to orthodoxy by an outward seeming respect for it. Mr. Simpson, at the recent meeting, could utter jokes at the expense of the clergy, but he was very deferential in his treatment of the source whence the clergy profess to derive their authority. Why not go to the root at once; if the priestly superstructure has been reared on a foundation of sand, why not say so? and not, when speaking of that which is felt to be an imposture, mimic the tones of the pulpit. Mr. Simpson explained the nature of revelation; we have misjudged him wofully if he does not know that there is an ever-living revelation of God in the human soul. Why did he not say so, and not

leave us to infer that the only revelations of which he was cognisant were those contained in nature and the Bible? When he was treating this point, we looked around us on the faces near, and discovered such an air of incredulity as would have done good to Mr. Simpson had he seen it. We felt, and others felt, that he had mistaken his audience. He may be quite certain, that any audience he will get around him in Glasgow will permit him to make a clean breast of it, and this he should do under any circumstance.—Editor of *Glasgow Freeman*.]

The Shorter Catechism is not a direct revelation from God. It is a series of inferences, or interpretations from Scripture, drawn in the seventeenth century, by mortal men like ourselves, in an age which knew little of science, because little science then existed—which believed in witchcraft, whose manners were barbarous, and whose minds were fiercely excited by civil and religious disputes. In particular, it was an age in which little was known of eastern languages, manners, and institutions, and which was therefore imperfectly qualified, compared with the modern, to discover the true meaning of Scripture, and correctly to interpret it. I ask then are we, and all our posterity, to be forced to bow to the interpretations of such men, as if they were inspired and infallible guides? A right to interpret Scripture for ourselves constitutes the very foundation of Protestantism, and what does this imply? Not that the majority have a right to force their interpretations on our consciences; but the reverse, that the humblest individual is to be protected in following the dictates of his own judgment, however widely he may differ from his neighbours, provided he do them no harm. The proposal to allow the minority to withdraw their children when the Catechism is taught, is a mere mockery and an evasion, while the majority assert their right to tax the Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Baptists, Unitarians, Glassites, Swedenborgians, Quakers, Jews, and all other sects, for teaching the Shorter Catechism in schools, merely because they regard it as an epitome of divine truth. These other sects main-

tain that, in their eyes, and according to their consciences, it contains pernicious errors, and it is no answer to them for the majority to say, after you have paid the tax, you may withdraw your children from the school if you please! This is adding insult to injury. Reverse the proposal, and bring in a bill to tax the Protestants for teaching the Roman Catholic Catechism in schools common to both, with liberty to them to withdraw their children; would not this be met by a universal howl of execration on account of its impudence and injustice? But the character of the proposal is not changed merely by changing perpetrators and the victims. It is as scandalous an injustice when practised by Protestants against Catholics as if done by Roman Catholics against Protestants. It is exceedingly difficult to enable persons who have been trained to regard the Shorter Catechism and the Confession of Faith as indubitably correct interpretations of Scripture, to look on them as mere human productions, liable, like all other works of man, to error and imperfection. But profound reasoners, although firmly attached to the Bible, have viewed them in this light. Bishop Watson (who defended the Bible against Gibbon and Paine) says, that when preparing to discharge his duties as Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, 'I reduced the study of divinity into as narrow a compass as I could, for I determined to study nothing but my Bible, being much concerned about the opinions of councils, fathers, churches, bishops, and other men as little inspired as myself. I never troubled myself with answering any arguments which the opponents in the divinity schools brought against the articles of the church, nor ever admitted their authority as decisive of a difficulty, but I used on no such occasions to say to them, holding the New Testament in my hand, *En Sacrum codicem!* Here is the fountain of truth, why do you follow the streams derived from the sophistry, or polluted by the passions, of man?' Again he says, 'I certainly dislike the imposition of all creeds by human authority; though I do not dislike them as useful summaries of what their compilers believe to be true either in natural or revealed religion.' Again—'What are the Catechisms of the Romish Church,

of the English Church, of the Scotch Church, and of all other churches, but a set of propositions which men of different natural capacities, educations, prejudices, have fabricated (sometimes on the anvil of sincerity, oftener on that of ignorance, interest, or hypocrisy) from the divine materials furnished by the Bible.' These are the words of one of the most able and learned defenders of Christianity and the Bible whom England has produced. In the *North British Review*, for February, 1847, Dr. Chalmers wrote—'As things stand at present, our creeds and confessions have become effete, and the Bible a dead letter; and that orthodoxy which was at one time the glory, by withering into the inert and lifeless, is now the shame and reproach, of all our churches.' Are not these the natural consequences of the creeds and confessions, which the clergy have too generally substituted for the Bible, having become inconsistent with the science, literature, and feelings of the age? Archbishop Whately says—'In reference to the religious improvement of those under our especial care, we should recollect that we are not, as you well know, appointed to the office of guides to be followed by a credulous and unthinking multitude, to whom we are to dictate with absolute authority what they are to believe and do, solely upon our word. Our office, on the contrary, is to give what is properly called religious instruction—to enlighten and guide the judgment of men, who ought to use, and who will use and act on their own judgment.' If, then, men have a right to use and act on their own judgment in matters of faith, as this excellent prelate so clearly expresses, how can the majority of our Scottish sects be for a moment listened to when they propose to tax the minority to teach a catechism which their judgment and consciences disclaim? The objections of the sects before named to the Church of Scotland's Catechism rest on the ground that, in their opinion, it does not contain a sound interpretation of Scripture; but there is another class of men, not yet designated by any special name, or recognised as a sect, but whose numbers, mental attainments, social position, zeal for religion, and pure morality, entitle them to some consideration, who strenuously object to

the introduction of the catechism into common schools, on the ground that it is inconsistent, not only with the Scripture, but with a direct order of God's providence as revealed in, and actually exercised through the instrumentality of nature; and who, therefore, regard the standards of the Church as grand obstacles to the moral, religious, and intellectual progress of the nation. It may be asked, who are these men? I answer that it is impossible to go into the society of educated persons, of whatever rank, and to hear them converse confidentially and earnestly on the high topics of man's religious nature and destiny, without discovering that the convictions of a large number of them have left the standards, and that they, some to the greater and some to the lesser extent, desire to see them either abrogated or reformed, as a measure indispensable to the emancipation of the intellects of the nation when acting in the domain of religion, from the trammels of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nay, it is notorious that in the Church itself such desires exist, and that there are great and good minds among the clergy who feel their souls imprisoned in the narrow casements of these antiquated formulas. In the United States of America this emancipation has been partially realised, and with what results? In Massachusetts, formerly the seat of the sternest orthodoxy that ever reigned on earth, the ancient standards have been abandoned. Has irreligion taken their place? No. There has been an increase of religious zeal, of churches, of schools, (in which no creeds are taught,) and a marked advance in social peace, reciprocal goodwill, refinement, intelligence, and civilisation. In Pennsylvania there was a numerous body of Presbyterians, who used the Scottish standards in their churches and their schools. In 1830 I found that this sect had split in two—the majority insisted on reforming the standards, the minority resisted, and a grand disruption was the consequence. The seceding majority asserted their mental freedom, and, instead of lapsing into indifference, their zeal, kindled by intellectual independence, led, as in Massachusetts, to an increase of churches, congregations, and schools. In Philadelphia, the Society of Friends also have

had a disruption, the great majority having passed into more liberal views of faith than their ancestors held. In Germany the standards of the 16th and 17th centuries have long been abandoned by the great majority of educated Protestants; and in that country a larger advance in civilisation has been made within the last thirty years than a century before. In England the Church is daily sending off secessions to Roman Catholicism on the one hand, and to Unitarianism or Deism on the other. And one grand characteristic of these movements is, that the individuals engaged in them are profoundly and sincerely religious. They have fondered upon the inconsistencies of the Church's standards; and the weaker and more emotional minds have taken shelter with Rome in the domain of unreasoning authority, while the bolder and more energetic thinkers have struck off into the regions of natural religion. The men now alluded to are wholly unlike Hume, Voltaire, and Paine, who attacked Christianity as an invention of priests. The deserters from the standards are sincerely pious. It is necessary only to mention the names of Francis Newman, James Martineau, Theodore Parker, and George Dawson, as specimens of the more general class of liberal religious men who object to the standards. In England this class has a quarterly review (the *Prospective*), and an extensive and rapidly-increasing literature, as the exponents of its opinions; and they have many approvers in Scotland. I ask, therefore, have men of this stamp, no consciences and no rights? Is it no

outrage to tax them to teach standards which they regard as national evils, and against which every faculty of their minds rebels? Are they the subverters and destroyers of social order, or the enlightened advocates of freedom and progress? To be able to reply to these questions, you need only recal for a moment the names of the leaders in our struggle for parliamentary, financial, and judicial reform, for free trade, and for our best measures for social improvement. Are they the liberals in religious creeds, or are they the class of which Robert H. Inglis in England, and Dr. Candlish in Scotland, may be fairly taken as the types, who have been the grand movers in these and other beneficial measures? Let me not, however, be misunderstood. I state no objection to the standards as rules of private judgment, and I sincerely respect every man in admiring them, who by experience finds them conducive to his own salvation. The freedom which I claim I grant to all. I am ready to shake hands with every sincerely religious man, and to hail him as an honour to his country, provided he carry out his professions in his actions, and respect men of other faiths as he desires that they should respect him and his. It is only when he converts his own standards into chains of iron, and insists, in the name of God, on his right to bind with them the consciences of his neighbours, that I call on you, and on all who love justice, to oppose him.—*From an Address by George Combe, delivered in the City Hall, Glasgow.*

## Our Platform.

From which any earnest opponent may controvert our opinions, and from which any may expound views not coincident with our own, if tending to the Rationalisation of Theology.

## SUPERHUMAN POWER.—THE DESIGN ARGUMENT.

SIR,—If I understand Mr. Parry's argument in No. 278, when he says, 'Paley's simile of a "watch" I humbly think sufficient for probability,' it is, that a man who should for the first time in his life find a watch (never having before heard or dreamt of the existence of such a machine and its uses), the probabilities are that he would, upon examining it, readily and certainly ascertain how it was made, and for what purpose. It may not, perhaps, be amiss, much as the design argument has been discussed, to consider this 'probability,' taking Paley's own position and language for our text. Paley says:—

'In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there, I might possibly answer that, *for anything I knew to the contrary, IT HAD LAIN THERE FOR EVER*; nor would it, perhaps, be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place, I should hardly think of the answer I had before given—that, for anything I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? Why is it not as admissible in the second case as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, namely, THAT WHEN WE COME TO INSPECT THE WATCH we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose; that is to say, that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, *and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day.*'

In inquiring into the value of the 'probability' contained in Paley's simile of the watch, it is of the first consequence that it should be clearly perceived that Paley supposes, or assumes, himself to be in entire ignorance both of the origin of stones and of watches. Of the stone he says, 'for anything I know to the contrary,' &c.; and of the watch, 'when we come to inspect the watch we perceive,' &c., indicating that not until he had inspected the watch did he know anything of it. Paley was both consistent and correct to this extent.

Upon meeting with a stone upon a heath, Paley assures us he could not hope by any examination of it to tell either how it came there, or how long it had lain there; in fact, that, for all he could hope by examining it to learn to the contrary, it might have lain there for ever: that is, we will suppose, ever since the beginning of the world, and not from all eternity. But supposing Paley found a watch upon the ground, upon taking up the watch and examining it—let it be remembered, he never having before either seen or heard of such an instrument and its uses—he immediately discovers, from the evidence contained within itself, and from no other source, that it is an artificial machine for marking the progress of time, and that it must, at some period anterior to his finding it on the ground, have been in the workshop of the artist. Paley does not merely perceive that it is a machine, but he discovers, also, without an effort, *what it was made for*—what was the ruling motive and object in the mind of the maker.

Considering the many accidents to which watches in general are liable, even when taken the greatest of care of, much more when allowed to lie on the ground—such as breaking of the main-spring or chain, exposure to cold, or even the

ordinary running down to which they are daily subject—and any one of which common occurrences it is legitimate and perfectly fair argument to assume *might* have been the fate of Paley's watch, I do not know which is most to be admired, Paley's boldness or his admirers' simplicity. What if the watch was stopped when he found it—run down, we will say, but the key attached to it—*would he have known then what the watch was intended for?* Would the key have told its own tale? Would he on seeing the key have known there must be a hole in which it would fit, and have set about looking for it, and when he had found it forthwith proceed to wind up the watch and set it going? Are any of these suppositions probable; and are there not many other difficulties of the same sort, which will suggest themselves to every reflective mind—assuming, of course, the watch to have been stopped?

As watches are not always stopped, this watch of Paley's *might* have been just wound up as he came along, and have slipped out of the hand of its owner into the grass instead of into the fob; in which case we will assume that it would go on without stopping for twelve or even twenty-four hours. How many readers of this journal, inhabitants though they be of the most mechanical country the world ever saw, are prepared to declare that they would in the space of twenty-four hours accurately define the nature of any machine whatever that might be placed before them, the nature and principle and purport of which should be entirely different to anything they had ever seen or heard of before? Yet this is Paley's position with the watch and the stone: he knew nothing of the stone, and the stone would not tell him anything; he knew nothing of watches, but the watch told him everything.

The answer which Dr. Paley says he 'might possibly' have given respecting a stone which he found upon a heath, *it is very certain* Dr. Buckland would not have given? *And why?* Because Dr. Buckland knows as much about *stones*, of which Dr. Paley was profoundly ignorant, as Dr. Paley knew about *watches* before he wrote his book upon Natural Theology. It follows, consequently, that if Paley had known no more of watches than he did of stones, he would have given an equally absurd answer respecting them that he did respecting stones; his was not assumed ignorance with respect to the stone, he *was* ignorant; but he had a previous knowledge of watches, and perhaps, as Ensor suggests, carried one in his fob. There were to him no 'sermons in stones,' but the watch told him the time of day directly.

I will not extend these remarks futher at present, but will wait and see if they give rise to any comments; I have, however, one further illustration to offer of the absurdity and inconclusiveness, to say nothing of its disingenuousness, of the design argument. There have been several apparently well authenticated instances published of men who, knowing nothing whatever of the manufacture of watches and musical-boxes, or their uses, having found one or the other, *supposed it to be a living organism*—and there is every reason why this should be the case under the circumstances, even granting that the published instances to which I have referred were not facts. It has been stated on unquestionable authority, though I cannot now find it, that some rude, unlettered people have considered that books spoke when they heard missionaries read from them; and why should they not imagine that watches talked, when they could hear a continuous audible sound proceed from them?

It requires but one well-authenticated ase of intelligence failing to find evident design, through previous inacquaintance with the subject, where another intelligence discovers design, through previous acquaintance, to destory the natural



theological argument, past, present, or to come. This one instance it was reserved for Paley himself to furnish in his answer-respecting the stone: for geologists profess to see as much evidence of design in stones as Paley did in watches.

Bristol, Oct. 5th, 1851.

W. CHILTON.

P.S.—I have just seen the *Westminster* for October, and partly read an article on 'Life and Immortality,' which I hope to have an opportunity of noticing some other time. There are, however, some passages in the said article, respecting 'design,' so closely resembling, in fact almost identical with, some of the illustrations in the foregoing (though used for the very opposite purpose), that a suspicion of plagiarism on my part might not be unreasonably supposed to arise in the minds of some, if I were not to state that I did not see the *Review* for some days subsequently to my despatching the above remarks.—W. C., Oct. 10th.

#### MR. MILLAR'S LATE REPORT.

SIR,—The *Reasoner*, as a chronicle of freethinking, ought never to have been used as a medium for such a *cowardly attack* as is made in No. 22 on one who has no means of defence, save that which is entirely under your control, and which you appear to be determined will only be devoted to records of *your own* personal adventures and periprinations. Your excuses for not inserting the report of Mr. Southwell's lectures forwarded by me, are a species of *insidious poison* distilled for what purpose I can only surmise. You *pretend* that it was out of consideration for Lloyd Jones, although the insinuations which you introduce into your remarks are calculated to produce more uneasiness than anything contained in the report. But why should Lloyd Jones, or any other public man, be 'left alone?' If acting in a public capacity he must be subject to public criticism; but according to you he might pursue the most damaging policy towards our cause, and because of a promise made by George Jacob Holyoake he must be 'left alone.'

As to the composition of the report, it can be easily explained. It originated at a meeting of our committee and friends, who, being anxious that some better organisation of the friends of freethinking should be brought about, agreed to suggest it through the *Reasoner*. At the time, as I was busily employed working, Mr. Southwell was requested to draw up a draft of a report. Mr. Southwell did so—gave it to me to alter or improve it to my mind, or otherwise use it as I thought proper. A portion of the draft prepared by him was taken and adopted, a portion, and the largest portion, was written by myself. This is the complete history—the truth, the full truth, and nothing but the truth—about the affair. I adopted what I agreed with, and became the only responsible party, which I still am, and am willing to defend everything therein contained. Mr. Southwell never saw the report as sent, and does not now know all that it contains. What good purpose could be served by dragging this before the public I know not, but these are the facts of the case, and can be substantiated by several of our friends here. How it was got up was no secret at Glasgow.

The personal reflections on Christian Socialism are anything but disparaging. If we are to keep silence, because what we say may be misconstrued, you had better stop the *Reasoner* at once.

The real honest Christian Socialist I esteem as highly as you can, and if you again read the communication you will find that I throw no odium on them. My object was to warn the readers of the *Reasoner* against a *class of jesuitical humbugs* who, having no regard to principle, seek to gain influence over the public mind

by the most *detestable chicanery*—who behind the mask of communism conceal the odious features of worse than *Jewish usurers*. I used in regard to them no name; those whom the cap fitteth, let them wear it—certainly not the true Christian Socialists, I think.

As regards Walter Cooper, I hold him in the highest estimation, and I have much pleasure in saying that his advocacy of Social Reform, so far as he had an opportunity in Glasgow, did honour to his head as well as the largeness of his heart. In my last, I merely threw out some surmises as to what would be the effect if certain plans were proposed; but I am certain nothing that was said was at all disparaging to him.

As to the report being one that would not be approved of by the 'Communists of Glasgow,' the only way of testing that was by printing it. One thing I am certain of is that it *would be passed* at any general meeting of the Glasgow Communist Society, and I have no objection that it be submitted to them, and will risk my reputation on the result.

If anything it contains could bear the construction of maliciousness, on me, and me alone, rests the stigma, from which I hope to be able to exonerate myself.

This much, sir, I think necessary in vindication of my own reputation, as well as in justice to Mr. Southwell, who has been so unjustly treated in your article.

All that I request is that I may be heard in defence from your 'Platform,' from which any earnest opponent can be heard.

On one thing, at all events, I am determined, that is that unless some explanation is made, the matter will not rest here. However, trusting to your sense of justice,

I remain in hopeful suspense,

GEORGE MILLAR.

The Committee, having heard the above read, hereby attest to its truth in every particular.

JAMES DODDS, President.

JOHN MCKENZIE.

WILLIAM DAIG.

GEORGE MORRISON.

JAMES MCLEAN.

[The imputations of this letter we take to be mere expressions of feeling under excitement, which the writer will probably not repeat in cooler moments. We therefore attach no importance to them, and make no reply to them. If our correspondent is indeed restricted to such means of defence as are under our control, he will yet find them amply sufficient for his purpose. We very freely accord him the utmost syllable of his defence. Having the pleasure of knowing Mr. Millar, and having personal as well as public reasons to respect him, we took some reason to explain that the report we declined (and which contained passages which surprised us as coming from him) was not really written by him. This exoneration of him which we made, he pleased to represent as a 'cowardly attack.' That he put his name to a report which was not his, in essential respects, was no fault in our eyes. Every secretary or chairman of a meeting has continually to sign addresses and reports he does not write, and for which he is never considered personally responsible. Nor should I ever have noticed the circumstance if I had not been obliged to notice the report, and forced to explain why. To decline its insertion without an explanation was not permitted to me, and it is rather too bad to call upon me to give my reasons (Mr. Millar himself asked for them in a private letter), and then to interpret my doing so into the 'distilment of insidious

poison.' My conjecture about the origin of the report turns out to be quite true, and we are quite sure that the majority of our readers will not be of opinion that 'truth is any libel.' We have no intention of offering any defence of what we said on a former occasion. We abide by those explanations, and there is an end of the matter. The reader has seen the little we said (only when we were asked to say it), and he now sees whatever Mr. Millar chooses to say upon it. He can, therefore, judge between us. The accusation of 'Jesuitical humbugs,' 'detestable chicanery,' &c., indicate to the reader the kind of discussion which we have avoided. A discussion which would do us more harm (by reason of its injustice) than any censures Mr. Millar may visit us with, which, however, from our respect for him, we are very sorry to incur.—G. J. H.]

### Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Previously acknowledged in No. 281, 741s. 6d.—J. Clarke and W. Storer, 1s.—J. Body, 1s.—G. R. Vine, 1s.—J. Robinson, Leicester, per Mr. Billson, 5s.—J. Boyce, 1s. For 'Shakspere,' per J. Bowes, Leeds, 12s.—T. Bedlington, Middlesbro', 10s.—H. L., 5s. Total, 777s. 6d.

This week is published, price Threepence, in a wrapper, 'The Philosophic Type of Religion' (as developed by Professor Newman in his work upon the 'Natural History of the Soul,') Stated, Examined, and Answered, by George Jacob Holyoake.

This week is ready, price One Penny, the Last Days of Mrs Emma Martin—that is, the 'Words Spoken at her Grave,' with a short Biography, slightly enlarged since its appearance in the *Reasoner*.

☞ Monthly Parts of the *Reasoner* are uniformly ready in a double Supplementary Wrapper every Magazine day. Volumes of the *Reasoner* are made up (and can be had bound) Half Yearly.

### GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Nov. 9th [7], Ernest Jones, 'Hungary & Kosuth.' 11th [8½], Discussion in the Coffee Room.

National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Nov. 9th [8], P. W. Perfit will lecture.

Hall of Science, City Road.—Nov. 9th [7], Thomas Cooper, 'Roman History.'

South London Hall, Webber Street, Blackfriars Road.—Nov. 9th [7½], Robert Cooper, 'The World of the Future, or the Destiny of the Millions.'

Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [8], Discussion. Nov. 9th [7], a lecture.

Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8½], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7½], on 'Moral and Social Science.'

Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.

City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8½], a Discussion.

Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.

### ADVERTISEMENT.

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## Our Open Page.

THE *Nonconformist*, of Oct. 1st, remarks:—‘If man be no longer a superfluity, he must not be treated politically as such. The people are not a mass, but a multitude—and they are not to be legislated for, but the sum of their individual suffrages to be embodied in law. Law has handed over a diocese to a bishop, a parish to a priest, and a district to a tax-gatherer without the slightest regard to the will of the souls dwelling therein—only where law has been broken, has the individual been recognised. Thus all man’s interests have been circumscribed, all his faculties crippled, and therefore his value impaired. But a new element is at work in these islands. This half a century will not be as the last. Man will attain his proper value, not by the transference of numbers from one hemisphere to another, as of weights from the right scale to the left, but by the inspiration of self-knowledge. Once impregnate the “masses” with the truth that all men are essentially equal, and that each has a right to whatever is essentially human, and that dull, inorganic lump will break up into so many distinct entities, recognising in each other an indefinite value and indefeasible claims. Then in the market-place, in the church, and in the state—

Man to man  
Will brothers be, and a’ that.’

The following are George Cornwall Lewis’s words on the influence of authority in matters of opinion (pp.73-4):—‘The diversity of Christian creeds is the more apparent when contrasted with the uniformity upon moral questions which prevails throughout the civilised world. Amongst all civilised nations, a merely uniform standard of morality is recognised; the same books on ethical subjects are consulted for the guidance of life, and if the practice differs, the difference is not, in general, owing to a diversity of theoretical rules of conduct. It will be observed, that the great controversies between the Christian sects either turn upon questions which have no direct bearing upon human conduct (such as the doctrines of the Trinity and Transubstantiation), or upon forms of church government and discipline, which are matters of positive institution. They rarely turn upon the moral doctrines which are involved in Christianity. Upon these there is a prevailing tendency and an approximation to an agreement. Scientific opinions follow a certain law of progressive development. While error is gradually diminished, truth is established by a continually enlarging consensus, like the successive circles made upon the surface of water. Opinion, however, in the several Christian churches, with respect to their distinctive tenets, is rather variable than progressive. It oscillates backwards and forwards, but does not tend by a joint action to a common centre.’

In Dr. Arnold’s lectures on Modern History (pp. 209-10), he says:—‘The excellence of veneration consists purely in its being fixed upon a worthy object; when felt indiscriminately, it is idolatry or insanity. To tax any one, therefore, with want of reverence because he pays no respect to what we venerate, is either irrelevant, or is a mere confusion.’

The member of the Manchester Branch writes upon a subject upon which nothing more must be said, if the pinciple he advises us to act upon is to be observed.

# The Reasoner

AND

THEOLOGICAL EXAMINER.

They who believe that they have Truth ask no favour, save that of being heard: they dare the judgment of Mankind: refused Co-operation, they invoke Opposition, for Opposition is their Opportunity.—EDITOR.

## THE HISTORY OF TWO NIGHTS IN BLACKBURN.

THE friends in Blackburn, who drew up the placard of the Lectures, headed it by a sentence from Ernest Jones (an admirable one in the place in which Mr. Jones spoke it). It was this—' Truth plays on an iron harp.' Whether the authorities of Blackburn thought that I was going to treat them to some metallic tones I know not; but they treated my presence among them as though I was a very great proficient in playing on this discordant instrument. The Assembly Room engaged for the lectures (the room in which the magistrates hold their meetings) was denied in a very unusual manner.

The not unfavourable report of the lecture in Burnley, at which Mr. McGregor appeared, which has been quoted in *Reasoner* No. 279, was taken, as was stated, from the *Blackburn Standard*. And just over that paragraph in the same column stood the following extraordinary morsel of composition:—' We understand that an infidel lecturer, of the name of Holyoake, had taken the Assembly Room for the purpose of delivering two lectures, in the course of the present week; but the Commissioners, as soon as they ascertained the nature of the man's mission in this neighbourhood, very properly ordered that the use of the room should not be granted for such a purpose. In order that our readers may form some idea of this demented creature's principles, we quote the following blasphemous passage from the last number of the *Reasoner*, a pitiful periodical, of which he is the editor. In describing a "row" which took place on the occasion of his appearance lately at Whitehaven, he says—" While this was going on, a grey-headed Christian got into furious action on his own account in front of the gallery, and threw his arms about in a frantic manner. ' You damned villain,' he exclaimed as he warmed, ' you said there was no God? Not sure whether he was drunk with the Holy Spirit, or any other exciseable spirit, (they both pay duty,) I said, ' Sir, I think you are slightly mistaken.' " Are the people of Blackburn disposed to listen to such a wretch?'

Whether this paragraph was written in justification of the step taken by the Commissioners I know not, but it seemed like it. It was written on the afternoon of my arrival in Blackburn, and printed before my first lecture was delivered; and it was the first public intimation given that the Commissioners had been the parties to interfere, of which we had no public proof till the *Standard*, in its indiscreet haste, supplied it.

The next morning I walked down to the *Standard* office, and said to a young gentleman at the counter, ' I wish to invest 5d. in your entertaining paper, in which your literary artist delineates me as a wretch; but I trust the likeness is not after life.' ' I don't think it is, sir,' was the polite reply.

Under the head of ' Freedom of Opinion in Blackburn,' the *Manchester Examiner and Times* reported that on Tuesday and Thursday evenings last, Mr. Holyoake, of London, was announced to lecture in the Assembly Room, Heaton

Street, the friends of that gentleman having agreed to pay twice the usual sum demanded for the use of the room, and also, on request, half of it (£1) in advance. To the great astonishment of Mr. Holyoake and his numerous friends in Blackburn, the Improvement Commissioners refused to let him have the room, giving him neither explanation as to such strange conduct, nor offering to give his friends compensation for the loss and inconvenience which they would be put to in engaging another commodious apartment, and in printing the necessary placards, &c., announcing to the public the alteration of the place of meeting. On Thursday Mr. Holyoake addressed a letter to W. Hoole, Esq., the chairman of the Commissioners, inquiring whether such a step had met with his approbation, or whether he condemned such an ungentlemanly proceeding. The answer to the letter was not written by Mr. Hoole, but was forwarded through the collector of rates, and was to the effect that the inquiries of Mr. Holyoake should be referred to the proper committee.

The letter I addressed to Mr. Hoole was as follows:—

‘ TO WILLIAM HOOLE, ESQ., CHAIRMAN OF THE IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS,  
BLACKBURN.

‘ Sir,—You are doubtless aware that the Assembly Room, in Heaton Street, which had been duly taken by my friends for the delivery in of lectures by myself, was refused on application for the key on the day of the first lecture; although a deposit had been taken by the agent of the room, and placards had been issued by my friends, relying on the good faith of the proprietors of the place. This is certainly a breach of faith, such as gentlemen are not accustomed to show to working men, who were in this case chiefly the engaging parties—passing over the discourteous treatment of a stranger, who had never given offence in any way to any gentleman or inhabitant of Blackburn. As you, sir, are chairman of the Improvement Commissioners, whom the *Blackburn Standard* intimates have taken this step, may I ask on public grounds if it has your approval—the approval of one hitherto understood to be the friend of good faith and free expression of conscientious opinion? ‘ I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

‘ Talbot Inn, Blackburn, September, 1851.

‘ G. J. HOLYOAKE.’

The reply of Mr. Hoole was as follows:—

‘ TO G. J. HOLYOAKE, ESQ.

‘ Sir,—The Chairman of the Improvement Commissioners has handed to me your letter addressed to him, and has directed me to lay it before the proper committee.

‘ I refused you the key in consequence of hearing from many Commissioners and others that I had done wrong in letting you the room. I understood you wanted it for a scientific lecture, but I was deceived. I shall lay your letter before the committee.

‘ I remain, sir, yours respectfully,

‘ Blackburn, Sept. 18th, 1851.

‘ G. ILLINGWORTH.’

Besides the serviceable notice quoted from the *Manchester Examiner and Times*, the *Preston Chronicle* gave a fuller account, and the *Preston Guardian* a fuller one still:—

‘ MR. HOLYOAKE’S LECTURES.—For a length of time the friends of Mr. Holyoake in Blackburn have been anxious for that gentleman to deliver a course of lectures in that town. It was eventually decided that he should give two lectures this week—one on Tuesday evening, on the “Moral Innocency of Speculative Opinions,” and the other on Thursday evening, on “Catholicism, the Type of the Churches around us.” The lecturer arrived in Blackburn on Tuesday, but he had no sooner entered the town than he was informed that the Improvement Com-

missioners would not allow him the use of the Assembly Room, although Mr. Illingworth, the agent of the Commissioners, had not only let him the room, but had actually received 20s. in part payment of the rent. The consequence was that a fresh room had to be engaged, and placards issued announcing that Mr. Holyoake would lecture in a large room in Ainsworth Street, occupied by the members of the Mutual Instruction Society. In this place the gentleman delivered his first address, and in his introductory remarks he said that Blackburn was the first town which had refused him the use of a room when he or his friends had properly engaged it. It spoke little for the Christian liberality of the Commissioners. He then proceeded with his lecture, at the conclusion of which a short discussion took place. On Thursday last his second lecture was delivered, after which an animated discussion ensued between Mr. Alexander Wood, Mr. Thomas Higham, and the lecturer.'

At the request of some influential inhabitants in the town, I addressed letters to the *Preston Guardian* and the *Preston Chronicle*, in both of which journals the following communication appeared:—

'Sir,—Permit me to communicate a circumstance which has just occurred in Blackburn, which concerns the reputation of that town, and will not be without interest to the public in other places.

'Some friends of mine, chiefly *working* men, invited me to deliver two lectures to them, on the "Moral Innocency of Speculative Opinions, when conscientiously entertained," and on "Catholicism, considered as the Type of the Churches around us." For this purpose they engaged the Assembly Room; a high price was charged; a sovereign taken as deposit money; the subjects of the lectures were told to the agent of the Commissioners (Mr. Illingworth), and the name of the lecturer also, and no question was raised. Placards were duly issued; but, on the morning of the first lecture the key of the room was refused. On arriving in the town, I at once went to Mr. Illingworth's office, and to his private house, but could get no explanation and no key, and I was obliged to issue new bills at a late hour, and I had to speak in a room so badly ventilated that I have been unwell ever since.

'I wish, sir, to inquire whether it is the custom of the gentlemen in Blackburn (I am told that the Improvement Commissioners are *gentlemen*) thus to break faith with working men; or thus to treat a stranger, who never gave them, or any inhabitant of Blackburn, cause of offence in any way? Surely this is not precisely the example which gentlemen ought to set, or the kind of moral lesson which can elevate the character of the working classes, or exalt the reputation of the town. I feel it right to appeal, both against the personal discredit sought to be put upon myself, and the loss entailed upon those who engaged me—which, I maintain, are not capable of justification by any reference to my character, connections, subjects, writings, or speeches. 'I am, sir, yours respectfully,

'Talbot Inn, Blackburn, Sept. 18, 1851.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

I sent a copy of the same letter to the editor of the *Blackburn Standard*, but I believe it was never inserted. The letter I sent to this editor had the following:—

'P.S.—In reference to the paragraph you quote from the *Reasoner*, where it is related that an aged Christian in the Whitehaven Theatre called me a "damned villain," to whom, in reply, I simply said, "Sir, I think you are mistaken," you apply to me the epithet of "wretch." Such an answer to such an outrage hardly warrants such a description as you give of me, nor does the italicised matter which you quote (if the whole narrative be read) justify your epithet.'

The kindness of the personal friends in Blackburn was such as used to be exhi-

bited in the early days of Social advocacy, which one rarely meets with now. But of the disputants, they were the most imputative of any which for a long time have fallen in my way. Afterwards they all manifested a friendly feeling, but at first Catholic and Protestant were alike accusative and suspicious. But from the provincial press, from the gentlemen connected with the *Preston Guardian* and *Preston Chronicle*, I received fair and even generous civilities, as the communications to these journals (to be quoted) will show.

It had an awkward appearance for the contemporary press to present favourable reports of the Blackburn lectures. Their unanimity could not be without some foundation, and the *Blackburn Standard* felt uneasy at the comparisons made by the public, and accordingly it submitted to its readers the following extraordinary explanation:—

‘We offer no apology to our readers for the absence of any report of the infidel lectures recently delivered in this town. We are quite aware that some of our contemporaries in this and adjoining counties have given considerable prominence to the so-called “reasonings” of Mr. Holyoake. *He appears to have misled the reporters by his plausibility of manner.* It would not suit his purpose to disclose to the public the full enormity of his creed and principles. Those who have, like ourselves, examined his *Reasoner* (so denominated, we presume, on the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*) will readily agree with us in heartily reprobating the diabolical system of which that infamous publication is the exponent. The mild and gentlemanly lecturer can, in the character of editor, indulge in the foulest and most blasphemous terms of abuse of which the English language is capable. Such pestilent doctrines as he ventures to print would never be patiently listened to for a moment by any man claiming to be considered a rational being or a decent member of society.’

The editor of this journal certainly has a gift for being in the wrong. What an advantage it is not to know what you are writing about! You can say what you please with perfect confidence. Had this gentleman attended the lectures he would not have had the courage to have penned a paragraph so untrue. Even the editor of the *Blackburn Standard* could not pen this paragraph without some misgivings, so he sought to strengthen it by discoursing on Bloomerism, which phenomenon he ascribed to the *Reasoner*. Hear this ingenious historian:—The “lady” (Mrs. Dexter) who has been lecturing about female dress reform in London, and who has exemplified the matter practically, is well known to those members of the press who have dived into the dens of infidelity in which the metropolis abounds. The “John Street Institution,” in which the lecture was delivered, is one of a number of infidel institutions regularly advertised in the *Reasoner* and similar publications. This fact alone throws a suspicion on the movement, *which is by no means a novelty in England.* It was regularly adopted, more than a dozen years ago, at the Socialist Hall, Liverpool, when scores of females joined in the dances at that scene of iniquity *attired in a precisely similar costume.* This fact can be vouched for. The present *revival* of this hybrid style of dress will be found to *originate with the same party.* It is admirably designed, if it should ever become popular, to contribute to that demoralisation of habit, and that contempt of decency, which are but too consonant with infidel principles. No English “lady” will ever condescend to assume this impudent badge of social degradation.’

If this be true, that the Freethinking party originated the present agitation on dress reform, their connections must be very well organised, and their adroitness commendable. We must have had a correspondence with Mrs. Colonel Bloomer,



and induced that lady to make the experiment first in America, that the reimportation of the revived habit might wear the appearance of a transatlantic novelty.

The Socialists of London readily listened to Mrs. Dexter's proposal to lecture, not because she was one of them, which she was not, but because of their willingness to promote any useful reformation. On the night on which Mrs. Dexter's engagement was agreed to I happened to be in the chair, and I was at some trouble to explain to that lady the anxiety we experienced lest an injudicious advocacy should throw an air of levity or ridicule on what was in itself a desirable change. To Mr. Owen and his friends, indeed, belong the credit of having been first to call public attention to the absurdity and physical injury associated with the conventional costume of both sexes; but neither they nor the Freethinking party are responsible for the levity and injudiciousness of illustration with which the recent revival of that advocacy has been in many instances characterised, both in placard and on the platform. The paragraph quoted above from the *Blackburn Standard* has been reproduced in various journals, but it never would have been written had the writer been well informed upon the subject.

The next public information connected with the refusal of the Blackburn Assembly Room was, I am informed, in the shape of a placard, put out without any knowledge on my part, in that town, defensive of myself, but by whom to this day I am unaware. Next a small bill appeared, reprinting from the *Preston Chronicle* the discussion upon the matter at a meeting of the Improvement Commissioners. The following report is taken from the *Preston Guardian* of Oct. 4:—'Yesterday the usual monthly meeting of the Commissioners was held at the Sessions Room, Heaton Street, Mr. James Parkinson in the chair.' After various cases cited, the report says—'The next subject which claimed the attention of the Commissioners was the late unfortunate misunderstanding between them and Mr. Holyoake, of London. In order to give our readers the whole facts of the case, it will be necessary to publish the following letters, copies of which were forwarded to the Commissioners through W. Hoole, Esq. The first is—

“ TO WILLIAM HOOLE, ESQ., CHAIRMAN OF THE IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS,  
BLACKBURN.

“ Sir,—You are doubtless aware that the Assembly Room, in Heaton-street, which had been duly taken by my friends, for the delivery in of two lectures by myself, was refused on application for the key, on the day of the first lecture; although a deposit had been taken by the agent of the room, and placards had been issued by my friends, relying on the good faith of the proprietors of the place. This is certainly a breach of faith such as gentlemen are not accustomed to show to working men, who were in this case chiefly the engaging parties, passing over the discourteous treatment of a stranger, who had never given offence in any way to any gentleman or inhabitant of Blackburn.

“ As you, sir, are chairman of the Improvement Commissioners, whom the *Blackburn Standard* intimates have taken this step, may I ask, on public grounds, if it has your approval—the approval of one hitherto understood to be the friend of good faith, and free expression of conscientious opinion?

“ I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

“ Talbot Inn, Blackburn, Sept., 1851.

“ G. J. HOLYOAKE.”

‘ To this letter, a reply was sent to Mr. Holyoake by Mr. Illingworth, collector of rates, and the individual who let the room, stating that the subject of Mr. Holyoake's epistle would be laid before the proper committee. The second letter written to the Commissioners by the editor of the *Reasoner*, read thus:—

“ TO WILLIAM HOOLE, ESQ., CHAIRMAN OF THE IMPROVEMENT COMMISSIONERS,  
BLACKBURN.

“ Sir,—The recent communication from me, which (through Mr. Illingworth) you are pleased to say you will lay before the Improvement Commissioners, was one addressed to you *personally*.

“ The statement I would submit to that body is as follows; and I shall (and the persons also whom I represent) take it as a favour if you will lay it before them.

“ When the persons waited upon Mr. Illingworth, your agent, to take the Assembly Room, Mr. Illingworth asked what the lectures were to be upon for which the room was wanted. He was told that they were to be upon ‘ Speculative Opinion,’ and were ‘ to be delivered by Mr. Holyoake, of London.’

“ How he, therefore, could understand them (as he alleges in your letter to me) to be ‘ scientific ’ lectures, it is hard to conceive, and as he charged £1 per night, 10s. more than he has charged in some recent cases, he must have had some idea of the subjects, or why did he tax them 80 per cent. higher than the lecture of Dr. Watts, for instance, on education ?

“ As he let the room without scruple or qualifying remark, and accepted £1 as deposit money, my friends issued placards and summoned me, relying on the good faith which gentlemen are always understood to keep in their bargains, and which, as a matter of moral example, they are accustomed to keep with the working classes. Yet on the day on which my first lecture was to be delivered, the key of the room was refused, both to the parties engaging it and myself. Such a step as this was never taken with regard to myself before in any town, or with respect to any building, during twelve years of public lecturing.

“ In consequence of the denial of the Assembly Room, we had to issue new placards and place persons to direct people to a new room which we had to engage. It was half-past six at night before we had our notices out, and the irregularity of the proceeding and the unsuitability of the room, to which we were driven, caused the audience on both nights to be much smaller than we should otherwise have met, and also of a different character; as neither ladies nor the middle classes could be expected to attend an obscure and unhealthy room, from which my own health suffered much—as the audience became aware. It was a place into which I would not (it being immoral in a sanitary sense) invite a crowd of persons, under any avoidable circumstances. Besides, the public judge speculative doctrine by its associations, and when found under obscure or disadvantageous advocacy, they ascribe the circumstances to the principles themselves; thus, we suffered a moral discredit which ought not to have been put upon us.

“ On these accounts, I ask of the Improvement Commissioners the following compensation :—

In printing bills rendered useless...	...	...	...	...	£0	7	0
Posting ditto ...	...	...	...	...	0	3	0
Loss through new arrangements and diminished attendance, each							
night, £2 ...	...	...	...	...	4	0	0
Deposit ...	...	...	...	...	1	0	0
					£5	10	0

Believing that the room we engaged was refused by your agent under some misapprehension, and that, if all the circumstances had been known to you, you would not have ordered that step to be taken, I leave this claim to the adjudication, to the honour of the Improvement Commissioners.

“At one time I thought to forward this statement through a solicitor, and actually gave instructions to Mr. Clough for that purpose, but found that a question of law was likely (during its progress) to awaken feelings of personal antagonism on one side or the other, which I would as much deplore as you would dislike. I therefore restrict myself to this course; and in the above claim have not put down one sixpence in antagonism or retaliation. The damage is under rather than over-stated, as inquiry into the facts will, I think, show. This application is preferred both on my own part and on the part of those who engaged the room, who will acquiesce in what I have written, and to both parties your award will be final.

“Upon receiving information of your decision, I will instruct a friend in Blackburn to receive the sum you shall instruct to be paid.

“I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

“GEO. JACOB HOLYOAKE.”

“The claim of Mr. Holyoake was referred to the Highway Committee, and the result was as follows:—“Mr. Illingworth having let the Assembly Room to two persons in behalf of Mr. Holyoake, for the purpose of delivering two lectures, and having subsequently refused them the key in consequence of having been remonstrated with by various commissioners and other respectable inhabitants of the town, the subject of the lectures being considered by them objectionable, and Mr. Holyoake having claimed £5 10s. as compensation for the loss, resolved, that it be recommended to the Commissioners to return to the people who took the room the deposit money, 20s., and to pay 10s. for printing, &c., of the bills which were rendered useless. W. Hoole, chairman.” A discussion arose upon the claim, and the Committee’s resolution, but it merely elicited facts already known to the readers of the *Guardian*, except one, that Mr. Hoole, at the solicitation of several Commissioners and a few respectable inhabitants, refused the use of the Assembly Room. The report of the committee was adopted.”

A correspondent of the *Preston Chronicle* addressed to the editor the following communication:—

“Sir,—If persons will take a course, so fraught with the antipathy of a well-disposed public, as that of Mr. Holyoake, they must abide the consequences. It would indeed be a bad omen if such were not the case.

“With respect to the refusal of the Assembly Room, referred to by Mr. Holyoake in the *Chronicle* of the 20th ult., he seems to argue that there was nothing to justify such refusal. He says—“I feel it right to appeal, both against the personal discredit sought to be put upon myself, and the loss entailed upon those who engaged me—which, I maintain, are not capable of justification, by any reference to my character, connections, subjects, writings, or speeches.” Now, if a principle be good, it will bear carrying out. Let us try his. Suppose the manager at one of our large mills was to give permission to a party to make some experiments or give lectures in some part of the premises, under an impression that by so doing he was not in any way jeopardising his master’s property or reputation. When, however, his master is acquainted with such arrangement, he at once says that these experiments or lectures are of such a character that—however inconsistent it may appear—he cannot, with due regard to his property and reputation, do otherwise than annul any such arrangement made without his cognizance. Would any reasonable being blame him for thus protecting the one and defending the other?

“In reply to Mr. Holyoake’s question as to whether it is the custom of the

gentlemen of Blackburn thus to break faith with the working men, I would maintain that their conduct in this case cannot, with all Mr. Holyoake's plausibility, be fairly charged with such imputation.

'Blackburn, Sep. 25, 1851.

'FAIR PLAY.'

I am perfectly prepared to abide by any *fair* consequences of my 'course,' but 'Fair Play' ought not to be the person to call upon me to abide by *unfair* consequences. If the manager of a mill had given a person leave to experiment on his premises, knowing the nature of the experiments, as was the case with the agent of the Commissioners, the manager would be bound to compensate the experimenter when he broke his word for any loss he had occasioned the said experimenter by giving him his word. That is, he would do so if he was a friend of *fair play*.

Next, a friend of the editor of the *Blackburn Standard* came to the rescue in that paper of October 8th, after this fashion:—

'Dear Sir,—On referring to a copy of Mr. G. J. Holyoake's letter to the Blackburn Improvement Commissioners, in the *Preston Chronicle*, I find he states, "the public judge speculative doctrine by its associations." Premising that this seems to me the most sensible remark in the whole of his long complaint, I would briefly act upon it, and for a moment examine some of the associations and views held by the lecturer, and which, of course, must meet the approval of those who retained him for the meeting. Before doing this, however, let me ask for what purpose were the Commissioners created? Have they not to levy rates for the improvement of the town? And, if in times of distress amongst our operatives, some of their body have given vent to murmurs which palpably betray their inculcation by paid orators, and generally their tendency to slight both religion and order—is it not the duty of the Commissioners not to countenance, in any manner, one who would implant in the minds of the rising generation the principles of infidelity—believing as they do that to make a man a good citizen it is essential that you should make him a good Christian?

'But Holyoake may dispute these premises, and say that they were not sufficient reasons for refusing the room! In that case I would retort, you wish to show the innocence of speculative opinion!—so do the Commissioners!—it is speculative opinion that caused them to refuse you to lecture in the Assembly Room! But to return to the associations and views of the promoters and defenders (in this instance) of speculative doctrine. I have before me a copy of the *Reasoner*, No. 18, vol. XI., wherein he is attempting to rebut some lectures that were given against his doctrines, by certain clergymen in Nottingham. In page 271, finding himself hard pushed by one of them, he thus writes, "The atheist, without *positively asserting* that there *must* have been a beginning to life on earth, argues that his difficulties and ignorance are not in the least dispelled—but, on the contrary, complicated and increased—by the adoption of the ancient belief, (that is, the ancient Christian) in a *supernatural contriver and maker, who, after existing from eternity in absolute void and solitude, suddenly proceeds to create the universe out of nothing, or out of himself.*"

'I could multiply instances, but I shudder to write upon such awful and blasphemous ridicule on an all-wise God, and I am almost ashamed to *gravely* put the question (in the nineteenth century) were not the Commissioners justified in their refusal of the Assembly Room?

'In conclusion, let me quote from the prize Essay, "The Glory and Shame of Britain," a few words of advice to the working class—"It is high time that the working classes inquired into the character and principles of the men who aspire

to be their guides in social reform. On the stage of public life there are men who flatter the people the more easily to cheat them, whose prime passion is selfishness, whose only religion is hatred of all religion, and whose political creed is destitute of every peculiarity save extravagance;—but there are also men of tried character and noble principles, who are too honest to flatter even as the price of popularity, and whose abilities are equal to any task they may undertake. These are the people's friends; in these let the people trust."

'Blackburn, October 4th, 1851.

'SCRUTATOR.'

This letter deserves no serious reply. The paragraph quoted from the *Reasoner*, charged upon me as awful and blasphemous ridicule on an all-wise God, which it is not, was not written by me, but by a gentleman whose initials it bears.

The last defence was from 'A Commissioner,' who complains in the *Blackburn Standard*, of Oct. 8, 'that certain letters from Mr. Holyoake are introduced into the reports of the proceedings of the Improvement Commissioners which appear in the Preston papers of Saturday, "as if the same had been read or produced at the meeting." It is certainly correct that the correspondence in question was not read; and the allusion made to the matter at the meeting was of the most slight and cursory character. The publication of the letters under such circumstances is quite unusual.'

The last letter which has appeared on this subject, was the following, taken from the *Preston Chronicle* of Oct. 25, being my answer to the Commissioners and their defenders:—

'Sir,—Before this time I should have solicited the insertion of some answer to the reports of the proceedings of the Blackburn Improvement Commissioners, which appeared in your paper of the 4th inst., had not the death of Mrs. Martin suspended my provincial duties, and called me to the sacred task of vindicating her memory over her grave. Even now I am only able to write a hurried letter.

Certainly, sir, the Improvement Commissioners of Blackburn are the most extraordinary body of gentlemen in the country, and Mr. Hoole, their chairman, is not the least remarkable member. Although my communication was addressed to Mr. Hoole in his official capacity, and was in every sense *public*, he appears neither to have laid it before the body, for whom he received it, nor has he even acknowledged its receipt. Mr. Hoole, I am told, is a gentleman of omnipresent functions—schoolmaster, magistrate, and chairman—and I did expect that he would have added common courtesy to his other attainments. The only intimation I now have that the Commissioners have ever had my claim under consideration, is from the columns of your paper, and that of your contemporary, and the public and myself are indebted to the activity of your reporter for that knowledge. Although my letter ended praying for information as to the decision of the Commissioners, up to this hour I have had no answer from that body. Whether I am to take the report of the Preston papers as their official reply, I know not. If so, the Improvement Commissioners impose upon your reporter a duty very unusual—that of conveying their decisions to all applicants for their judicial attentions—and the *Preston Chronicle* and *Guardian* are *official* supplements to the records of the Improvement Commissioners of Blackburn.

'But, sir, there is more than discourtesy in this matter. I do not think that Mr. Hoole has acted honourably towards me or the public. It appears that it was upon his advice that the Assembly Room was refused me. By what right does this gentleman, professing to be the friend of freedom of opinion, deny to me the utterance of my conscientious sentiments? Mr. Hoole is one of those who believe

that we shall all one day stand before the bar of God, to answer for the opinions entertained in this life. Then upon what plea of kindness does he attempt to force me to hold his opinions, by refusing me the opportunity of inquiring as to which are the right ones? But if Mr. Hoole feels called upon, as a Christian, to prevent me being heard, I presume he does not feel called upon, as a Christian, to do me an injury. Yet he has done this. He caused me to lose my health, to suffer discredit and an important loss of proceeds; and, what I think more dishonourable still, he has also stifled my complaints by not laying before the Commissioners my claim for compensation. Is Mr. Hoole turning to a Roman Catholic, that he fears private judgment, and seeks to suppress public opinion? We have the best proof that Mr. Hoole is not well satisfied with the course he has pursued, or we should have heard from him before in his own defence. The public well know that that gentleman is not accustomed to keep silence when he thinks himself in the right.

‘I have shown, in my communication to the Commissioners, that Mr. Illingworth knew very well what he was about when he let the room; and my statement has not been denied, and will not be denied. Their agent, therefore, was *not* “deceived;” and they were bound, as gentlemen, to abide by his act, or to make me compensation. The special grounds on which I ask for recompense are not disputed, nor is the amount of the claim disputed; if this could be done, it doubtless would be. The public will therefore judge between us, and decide whether I have been treated honourably in the matter. I cannot believe that the Highway Committee ever had my communication to Mr. Hoole under their consideration, or they never would have made the recommendation of offering one pound ten, when in truth, and in public opinion also, we were entitled to five pounds ten.

‘A court of law would, I feel assured, have made a far different award; but I preferred the more friendly course of appealing to the honour of the Commissioners, and if this is their decision, which I can hardly believe, of course I shall abide by it; but I will not think so ill of the Christians of Blackburn as to suppose that is a decision that will give them satisfaction, or reflect any credit on their cause.

‘I take no notice of the letter of “Scrutator,” in the *Blackburn Standard* of October 4th. If he writes on behalf of the Commissioners, let him say so, and I will reply to his letter. If he writes on his own account, let him give his name, and then I will answer him. I say the same to “Fair Play,” who appears in your paper of the 4th. Even then these writers will not succeed in drawing me into a discussion upon the character of my opinions while they obscure the essential question of private honour and good faith, upon which the public attention is fixed in the conduct of Mr. Hoole and his brother Commissioners. Let this point be cleared up, and then they will find me ready enough to enter upon others; but let this be settled first.

‘Christians have a right to protect themselves against my opinions, if they think them injurious; but let them do it in an honourable manner. If they break faith with me, let them make me compensation. If they choose to interfere with my proceedings, let them do it in a manly way—let them not be both bigoted and mean.

‘I have forwarded a similar letter to your local contemporary; but I think it due to the publicity you have equally and generously given to the case of a stranger inhospitably treated to send you a letter also, for the information of your readers, who may desire to learn all the features of this strange Blackburn proceeding.

‘I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,  
 ‘Middlesborough, Tuesday, Oct. 23, 1851. ‘GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.’

THE LATE MR. LENNON.—We are happy to announce, in concluding this volume, that the subscription of £5 for the family of the late Mr. Lennon, of Whitehaven, is completed by the aid of W. J. B., A. T., and W. E. B. The following are the remaining acknowledgments:—Acknowledged No. 280, p. 331: £1 13s.—Arthur Trevelyan, £1.—T. W., 2s. 6d.—R. G. Whiteman, 1s.—J. Stoth, 1s.—Thomas Billington, 1s.—W. E. B. (second subscription), 10s.—W. J. B., £1 11s. 6d.; total, £5.

Reasoner Propaganda.

To promote the efficiency of the *Reasoner* as an organ of Propagandism, one friend subscribes 10s. weekly, another 5s., one 2s. monthly, others 1s. each weekly—others intermediate sums or special remittances, according to ability or earnestness. An annual contribution of 1s. from each reader would be easy, equitable, and sufficient. What is remitted, in whatever proportion, is acknowledged here and accounted for at the end of the Volume.

Previously acknowledged in No. 284, 777s. 6d.—W. J. B. (10s. weekly), for Nos. 265 to 285 inclusive, 20 weeks, 200s.—A Friend to Reason, for September and October, 40s.—J. W., 15s.—Jobert's Philosophy of Geology, given by Dr. Lees, 2s. 6d.—Thomas Bickerton, Leeds, 1s.; total, 1035s. The subscriptions to the volume amount to £51 15s. A balance-sheet will be inserted next week.

GUIDE TO THE LECTURE ROOM.

- Literary Institution, John St., Fitzroy Sq.—Nov. 16th [7], Thomas Cooper, 'Roman History,' 18th [8], Discussion in the Coffee Room.
- Hall of Science, City Road.—Nov. 16th [7], G. J. Holyoake, 'Can the Atheist be Moral?' National Hall, 242, High Holborn.—Nov. 16th [8], P. W. Perfit, 'Archbishop Crammer.'
- South London Hall, Webber Street, Blackfriars Road.—Nov. 23 [7], 'Manchester School of Cobden, Bright, &c.'
- Institute of Progress, 10A, Upper George St., Sloane Square.—Friday evenings [8], Discussion. Nov. 16th [7], a lecture.
- Eclectic Institute, Denmark Street, Soho.—Every Friday [8], Mr. J. B. O'Brien, 'Home and Foreign Politics.' Every Sunday [7], on 'Moral and Social Science.'
- Areopagus Coffee and Reading Room, 59, Church Lane, Whitechapel.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (8), a Lecture or Discussion.
- City Forum Coffee House, 60, Red Cross Street.—Every Sunday, Monday, and Thursday [8], a Discussion.
- Commercial Hall, Philpot Street, Commercial Road East.—Every Tuesday and Thursday evening [8], a Discussion.
- Mr. Gardner's School Room, Preston.—The Friends of Political and Social Reform meet every Sunday at 2 p.m.

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London: James Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster-row.

HALL OF SCIENCE, Near Finsbury Square, City Road.—East London Society of Reasoners.—The Committee and Friends of the above Society have engaged the Hall of Science, City Road, for a TEA PARTY & PUBLIC MEETING, on Monday evening, Nov. 17, 1851, to celebrate the success of their labours in Bonner's Fields, Victoria Park, and its vicinity.

The principal leaders of the movement will be present, Thornton Hunt, Esq., in the chair. A report of the Society's proceedings during the past year will be read, and the meeting will be addressed by the following gentlemen: Mr. W. D. Saull, Mr. James Watson, Mr. G. J. Holyoake, Mr. Thomas Cooper, Mr. Robert Cooper, Dr. Brooks.

The Committee have the pleasure to state that Mr. John Lowry, whose musical talent is so well known, has consented to attend and enliven the proceedings with his progressive songs.

Tea on table at Six o'clock. Tickets, 9d. each, to be had of Mr. Watson, 3, Queen's Head Passage, Paternoster Row; Mr. E. Truelove, John Street, Fitzroy Square; Mr. Whitell, Lecture Hall, Commercial Road East; Mr. Draper, Areopagus Coffee House, Church Lane, Whitechapel; Mr. Andrews, South London Hall, Webber Street, Blackfriars Road; at the Literary Institution, Morpeth Street, Bethnal Green; and of the Committee, on Sundays, in Bonner's Fields.

Those friends who do not take Tea will be admitted to the Hall at 8 o'clock, on payment of 2d.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

POPULAR WORKS.

A Few Days in Athens, 1 vol., cloth. By Frances Wright .....	1 6
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Our Open Page.

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On Sunday evening next, Mr. G. J. Holyoake will lecture at the Hall of Science, City-road. Subject—'Can the Atheist be Moral?'

We frequently receive notices of lectures for our 'Guide to the Lecture Room' too late. All such notices should reach us on the Saturday before our day of publication. Mr. James Campbell's lecture in Manchester, on the 'Life and Writings of Mrs. Martin,' was omitted on this account.

Edward Grubb, Esq., the teetotal lecturer, has been engaged by the Christians of Colne in the Piece Hall. In one lecture he promised to 'refute the objections of atheists or other infidels.' Does not Mr. Grubb know that infidels are not atheists?

Does any reader remember any divines of eminence who regard theology as a Science? We should like the passages.

Mr. Chilton has for sale for a friend, Mirabaud's System of Nature, 3 vols., hf. bd., Davison's Edition, 1820; The Deist, 2 vols., bd., Carlile, 1819; Paine's Theological Works, 1 vol., hf. bd., Carlile, 1819. All as good as new; price, 12s.

Now published, price Threepence, in a wrapper, 'The Philosophic Type of Religion' (as developed by Professor Newman in his work upon the 'Natural History of the Soul,') Stated, Examined, and Answered, by George Jacob Holyoake.

Now ready also, price One Penny, the Last Days of Mrs. Emma Martin—that is, the 'Words Spoken at her Grave,' with a short Biography, slightly enlarged since its appearance in the *Reasoner*.

The Prospectus of the 'Cabinet of Reason' will appear next week.

Volume Eleven of the *Reasoner* will be ready, bound in cloth, in a few days.

'A constant Purchaser,' Sheffield, who wishes to know the names of any Charitable Institution of the Catholics in York, he having a sister whom he supposes to be there, had better write to Mr. Brown, bookseller, 4, Collier Gate, York, whom, we think, will be able to answer his inquiries, and willingly do so if able.

A correspondent has lately inquired, 'What was the oath taken by the late Richard Carlile, and its effect?' We referred his note to our publisher, who answers:—'As to the oath taken by Mr. Carlile when he applied for a preacher's license, I do not recollect his printing it, and believe it is the usual oath tendered to every one applying for a license to preach. It is a great mistake to suppose any change took place in his sentiments, further than the scope given to those who symbolise the Bible instead of taking it in its literal form.'

A friend, 'J. K. Y.,' lately presented us with two Bibles to sell for the benefit of the 'Reasoner List.' The proceeds of one has been acknowledged, the remaining copy is a serviceable and respectable looking work, in a binding warranted orthodox. As this publication will be very scarce when Cardinal Wiseman displaces our bishops, we trust some prudent Protestant will buy it at 4s. or less. We have placed it in the hands of our publisher.

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END OF VOL. XI.



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